



VERSE AND VIRTUOSITY

THE ADAPTATION OF
LATIN RHETORIC IN
OLD ENGLISH
POETRY

JANIE STEEN

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JANIE STEEN

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For Guy

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Abbreviations

~~ASPA~~ Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, ed. G.P. Krapp and E.V.K. Dobbie, 1931–53

~~AS~~ *Sanctorum ... supplementum*, ed. Johannes Bollandus and successors, 1643 sequentia

~~BEAB~~ Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England, ed. Michael Lapidge, John Blair, Simon Keynes, and Donald Scragg

~~ETS~~ English Text Society
original series

supplementary series

~~Handlist~~ of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100

~~BE~~ Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors

~~ASL~~ Anglo-Saxon Library

~~Bible~~ Biblical Gospels from the Canterbury School of Theodore and Hadrian, ed. Michael Lapidge and Bernhard Bischoff

~~PL~~ *Urologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, 1844–64
Rolls Series
Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores

VERSE AND VIRTUOSITY

Introduction

The inventiveness of much Old English verse derives from the blend of the native poetic tradition, rooted in an oral Germanic past, with a new Latin culture that is mostly Christian and bookish. Vernacular verse thrives on the tension between this highly literary Latin learning and an inherited poetic style that appeals to ‘the auditory imagination.’¹ Strands of Latin influence – biblical and classical, insular and continental – pervade Old English verse so deeply that the poems can not be understood without appreciation of their sources.² But while it is generally accepted that Latin models have shaped the subject-matter of many Old English poems, the question of stylistic influence remains controversial. Exactly which figures in vernacular verse are inherited, and which are borrowed from Latin rhetoric? Even more elusive is the nature of the alleged influence: through what channels did Latin rhetorical devices reach Old English poetry, and how did they bend to the particular tune of the native idiom? Were they employed consciously, and what was their intended role?

This book attempts to shed light on these questions by examining the conversion of Latin texts into Old English verse. For an aspiring vernacular poet, the gulf between Latin rhetoric and the vernacular tradition would have made the task of translation a daunting challenge, one that required not only faithfulness to the Latin authority, but also flexibility in adapting its style and substance to a very different idiom, with its *agene wisan*, ‘own way.’ By measuring poets’ response to this challenge, we can outline the contours of Old English poetic style. Techniques of ‘translation,’ or better, ‘adaptation,’ can be illuminated through the complex interaction between traditional patterns and Latinate borrowings. We shall see, for example, how Old English poets harness the allusive power of vernacular patterns to assimilate foreign devices, by creating echoes within the poem’s structure, and within the wider vernacular tradition. We shall also be able to

discern moments of individual creativity, when the demands of adapting Latin figures inspire poets to flaunt their own art and virtuosity.

‘Rhetoric’ is a widely used word that covers widely different meanings. The distinction between ‘Latin rhetoric’ and ‘native tradition’ that is implied here thus deserves some qualification at the outset. In a more specific sense, adopted in this book, ‘Latin rhetoric’ comprises the various catalogued schemes and tropes that grace speech with *uis* and *gratia* (‘force’ and ‘charm’),³ those figures of marked language that seek to persuade and move us. A broader understanding of ‘rhetoric’ is ‘the skill of speaking well,’ *bene dicendi scientia*, and thus encompasses both the theory and the practice of artful persuasion.⁴ In this more general sense, ‘rhetoric’ is not an exclusively classical construct. After all, poetry – the most elaborately figured kind of composition – is an innately rhetorical form of speech; as Cicero remarked, the poet is a ‘close kinsman to the orator.’⁵ Old English Christian verse, in particular, is inherently rhetorical, for it aims to instruct as well as delight, and instruction is wrought by persuasion. So by setting up an opposition between the ‘vernacular tradition’ and ‘Latin rhetoric,’ I do not wish to imply that Old English poetry is any less rhetorical – in the broad sense – than Latin verse. In this book, I use ‘rhetoric’ mostly in the stricter sense of the Latin discipline and its inventories of rhetorical figures.

The ‘native tradition’ – the characteristics of vernacular poetic style – should also be outlined in broad brush strokes. It has been customary to say that ‘instead of implying an author, Old English verse implies tradition,’ and to assume that echoes between poems are the traces of a shared oral inheritance.⁶ In 1953, Francis P. Magoun applied to Old English verse the oral-formulaic theory, which had originally been developed by Milman Parry and Albert Lord, and which claimed to prove that Homer’s verse had been orally composed.⁷ The debt of Old English verse to oral tradition is now perceived to be more complex, since poems derived from Latin sources can boast equally high levels of formulas.⁸

But even if vernacular poetry was not improvised by illiterate bards, traditional aural features are part and parcel of Old English literary style. Repetitions, in particular, appear at every level, from alliteration and metre to the larger shaping echoes, from

ornamental patterns to structural punctuation. To a modern audience, accustomed to a very different aesthetic, repetition may seem boring and redundant – Milan Kundera, for example, comments on the reluctance of modern translators to preserve repetitions found in their sources.⁹ But for an Old English audience, the ‘oftening, over-and-overing, aftering’ of speech must have provided aesthetic satisfaction in order and wholeness.¹⁰ Repetitions can reach directly to the audience’s emotions, carrying them away, as George Puttenham remarked, ‘whither soeuer the heart by impression of the eare shal be most affectionately bent and directed.’¹¹ Moreover, we shall see that repetition is also an important structural device in Old English poetry, for it performs a structural role in the ‘demarcation of acoustic space,’ and is thus often a key to interpreting the poems.¹²

Of course, the opposition between ‘native tradition’ and ‘Latin rhetoric’ is not meant to imply that aural figures never appear in Latin verse. But the two traditions differ in the extent to which they rely on repetition (in both structure and ornamentation), and in the particular types of repetition they employ.

In its concern with the connections between Old English poems and Latin texts, this book responds to the current interest in sources, analogues, and intertextuality.¹³ More generally, this study reflects the abiding fascination with the bond between Old English literature and Latin learning. For much as some have yearned for the roots of English poetry to be purely English, nearly all surviving vernacular poems are influenced in some way by Latin literature. Even *Beowulf*, once the epitome of all things Germanic, has been shown to have Latin parallels.¹⁴ The following chapters will try to move beyond the simple dichotomies between ‘native’ and ‘imported,’ oral and literary, even ‘vernacular’ and ‘Latinate,’ and show that Old English verse is at its most successful when it blends these different elements.

The surviving book-lists and manuscripts from Anglo-Saxon England witness to wide reading and well-stocked libraries, and indicate that despite our partial knowledge, this was no dark age.¹⁵ What is harder to establish, however, is what strands of Roman rhetorical learning reached Anglo-Saxon England. This question is taken up in [chapter 1](#). In [chapter 2](#), I try to substantiate

the distinction between ‘Latin rhetoric’ and ‘vernacular tradition,’ by surveying the patterns and devices that characterize each of them. In the main body of the book, I examine selected Old English poems that range from close renderings to loose paraphrases of Latin sources, and assess the influence of Latin rhetoric on their style. [Chapter 3](#) is concerned with *The Phoenix*, a close rendering of a poem by the renowned African rhetorician Lactantius. In [chapter 4](#), I consider *Judgment Day II*, a translation of an Anglo-Latin poem probably composed by Alcuin. [Chapter 5](#) discusses two riddles from the Exeter Book (35 and 40), which are close renderings of Anglo-Latin *Enigmata* by Aldhelm, an Anglo-Saxon author renowned for his skill in both Latin and vernacular verse. Finally, [chapter 6](#) examines the poems of Cynewulf, whose works are ‘Latinated’ in style, but are only loosely based on Latin prose sources. This selection of poems aims to give a cross-section of the vernacular tradition, and to open up a broad range of relationships between sources and their verse translations: from close renderings to loose paraphrases, from adaptations of Christian Latin authors to translations of Anglo-Latin poets.

CHAPTER ONE

Knowledge of Rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon England

The description of rhetorical patterns has often been the meticulous matter of hair-splitting taxonomy.¹ But to understand the nature of vernacular poetry and the possible influence of Latin rhetoric on it, mere classification is inadequate. We have to explain why certain rhetorical patterns are there, and if these patterns are indeed Latinate, we should clarify how they might have come to be there. Many scholars who claim to have spotted Latinate rhetorical devices in Old English poetry have tended simply to take it for granted that vernacular poets must have been rhetorically trained, or at least well versed in the classifications and nomenclature of classical rhetoric.² But is this assumption justified?

Our understanding of the intellectual foundations of Anglo-Saxon literary culture has been greatly refined in recent years through the painstaking research of a number of scholars. Gabriele Knappe has traced the transmission of Roman rhetoric to Anglo-Saxon England.³ Helmut Gneuss's *Handlist* of the surviving manuscripts, and Michael Lapidge's reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon library, have allowed us a much clearer idea of what material was available to Anglo-Saxon poets.⁴ Drawing on these findings, I will summarize in this chapter the historical evidence for knowledge of Roman rhetoric in England, and argue that the evidence for direct knowledge of rhetoric, either learned in the classroom or gathered from reading rhetorical manuals, is inconclusive, and too weak to support the categorical assumption that vernacular poets were versed in Latin rhetoric. Instead, I suggest a more indirect approach, which will help to explain the apparent rich and widespread use that Anglo-Saxon poets make of Latinate rhetorical devices.

Classical rhetoric emerged in Greece. But the civic origins of

systematic rhetoric around the fifth century BC, its quarrel with philosophy, and its subsequent developments in the Hellenistic period are not of direct concern here, for Greek was hardly known in Anglo-Saxon England.⁵ Roman rhetoric developed in the most part from the exercise of the skilful techniques of forensic oratory, that is, the methods of argumentation and persuasion which were practised in Roman law courts.⁶ Under the empire, deliberative (political) oratory was no longer so freely practised, but rhetoric gained new life as a school subject, leaving its imprint on lawyers, administrators, philosophers, and writers.⁷ After instruction in grammar, a student passed into the final and most advanced phase of his higher education under the supervision of a rhetor, from whom he learnt mastery of language, and the art of declamation, as exemplified in the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, practised by Cicero, and later catalogued by Quintilian.⁸ The student learned the main generic types of rhetoric: the epideictic or demonstrative (concerned with praise or blame), the deliberative (concerned with what is expedient) and the forensic (concerned with what is just), with particular emphasis on the last. The curriculum included the divisions of speech in the structure of a judicial oration (such as exordium, narratio, argumentatio, refutatio, peroratio); the elementary exercises or progymnasmata (such as fable, narrative, maxim, simile, prosopopoeia, ecphrasis); the analysis of an argument, that is, inuentio (finding of material), dispositio (arranging of it), elocutio (style), memoria (retention of ideas, words, and their order), pronuntiatio (delivery); and the embellishing figures of speech (such as antithesis, apostrophe, homoeoptoton).⁹

Like other provinces in the Roman empire, Britain needed highly trained, articulate administrators, and we can assume that they did not all go abroad for their rhetorical education. Facts are few and far between, but we can surmise from several Latin authors that rhetorical schools flourished in Roman Britain.¹⁰ Juvenal's slighting remark that 'eloquent Gaul has taught the Britons to plead; now Thule speaks following the lead of a rhetor' snipes at rhetorical learning in provincial Britain, but we can suppose that (for the satire to have stung) a British education must have been held in good repute.¹¹ Later, in the third century, there is an ambivalent reference to a Romano-British rhetorician, the father of the military leader Bonosus.¹² In the fourth century, the

outstanding oratory of the Romano-British heresiarch Pelagius suggests that he had had a rhetorical education, presumably before he left Britain for the Continent.¹³ More substantial evidence of rhetorical learning is found in the fifth-century autobiographical writings of St Patrick, a Romano-Briton who was abducted from his native Wales by Irish raiders when he was only sixteen, just at the stage when he would have been ready to progress to the supervision of a rhetor. Perhaps feeling his lack of polish, Patrick addresses his elders as clever rhetoricians (*domini cati rethorici*), accomplished in judicial affairs (*legis periti*), and skilled in rhetorical concision (*brevitate disert*).¹⁴ As the final piece of evidence, we can mention the British Latin author, Gildas, who probably lived in the fifth century, when the Roman education system was still functioning. His *De excidio Britanniae* is an invective on the calamities suffered by the sinful British (including the Anglo-Saxons' invasions), because of their lapse from true Christianity. The work is written in polished Latin, and is cast as a forensic oration, which demonstrates that Gildas had had a thorough education at the hands of a rhetor.¹⁵

But what remained of rhetorical learning as the imperial government collapsed, and the educational institutions vanished? Learning survived in the new centres where the Christian faith was guarded, the monasteries, which had reached Gaul by the early fifth century, and thence gradually spread throughout Europe.¹⁶ Monastic life came to England in 597 with the Roman mission of Augustine, who founded the monastery of SS Peter and Paul in Canterbury.¹⁷ But the Latin learning of these new religious foundations was very different from that of the Roman school system. Monastic education was not geared to the moulding of a polished public speaker, but was centred on interpreting the Bible and patristic writings.¹⁸ There is no direct evidence that the progymnasmata (the preliminary rhetorical exercises) were ever taught in the monasteries of Anglo-Saxon England.¹⁹ And there are no remaining manuscripts of the seminal Roman rhetorical texts: Cicero's *De oratore*, the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, the model speeches of the elder Seneca, and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*.²⁰

There was, in fact, avowedly a strong prejudice against pagan learning, especially the heathen art of rhetoric, which was seen to

falsify Christian truth. Rhetoric's sophistication was deemed to be in conflict with the declared simplicity of Christianity, expressed in the commonplace that Christianity had been founded not by orators but by fishermen, not by philosophers but by rustics.²¹ St Paul famously rejoiced in the living spiritual plainness of speech, rejecting 'the enticing words of man's wisdom' (I Corinthians 2.4). Christianity was a religion of the Book, but while that Book, as Augustine observes, preserves its mystery in profundity of meaning, it does so 'offering itself to all in words most open, and in a most humble kind of speaking.'²² Peter and John were 'illiterates and laymen' (*homines ... sine litteris et idiotae*, Acts 4.13). Paul claimed to be 'ignorant in speech, but not in understanding' (*inperitus sermone sed non scientia*, II Corinthians 11.6)

Of course, the majority of patristic authors were far from simple cowherds. They had received a sound schooling in renowned halls of rhetorical learning.²³ Many of the best known Church Fathers (for example, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, and Augustine) had once held prestigious positions as celebrated teachers of rhetoric. But such was the Christian prejudice against classical letters that most authors who were rhetorically trained – from Ambrose and Augustine to Caesarius of Arles and Venantius Fortunatus – made a point of publicly renouncing all knowledge of classical learning, and in particular, their rhetorical expertise.²⁴ We shall see later that this attitude was fraught with ambivalence. But outwardly, at least, the Christian position was that of Bishop Paulinus of Nola (353–431), who when rejecting the pleas of his former teacher, the rhetorician Ausonius, to return to the fold of literature, declaimed: 'let the rhetoricians keep their literature, the philosophers their philosophy, the rich their wealth, the princes their kingdoms. Our glory, property, and kingdom is Christ.'²⁵ There are surely echoes of this attitude in Bede's celebration of Cædmon, an illiterate labourer, as an icon of vernacular poetry, who recited verse at the inspiration of an angel.²⁶

The only evidence we do have of rhetorical learning in Anglo-Saxon England amounts to references to one branch of rhetoric, namely *elocutio*, the embellishing figures of speech. The reason why *elocutio* fared better in the environment of Christian learning than the other strands of classical rhetoric is that it was seen to belong not just to rhetoric, but to grammar, the study of correct

Latin, in Quintilian's words, *recte loquendi scientia*.²⁷ Cicero and Quintilian believed that skill in *elocutio* showed the true distinction of an orator,²⁸ but since Roman times, *elocutio* was in fact a contested terrain: Quintilian and other classical rhetorical theorists tried (rather unsuccessfully) to draw clear boundaries between 'grammatical figures' and 'rhetorical figures.'²⁹ And grammatical manuals, such as Donatus's influential *Ars maior*, sometimes included a section on figures.³⁰

Grammar had always comprised *scientia interpretandi*, the skill of interpretation, so as opposed to rhetoric, grammar was deemed acceptable to Christian scholars, because it was seen as important for the exegesis of the Scriptures.³¹ In the sixth century, Cassiodorus's influential work, the *Expositio psalmorum* interpreted the psalms through the study of schemes and tropes, and was widely read throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.³² Isidore's early seventh-century *Etymologiae*, a compilation containing the figures of speech, was also known.³³

In the early Anglo-Saxon period, we have direct evidence that rhetorical figures were taught as part of exegesis at the Canterbury school. England's first Christian school was founded by Archbishop Theodore (668–90) and his colleague Hadrian (d. 709), abbot of the monastery of SS Peter and Paul. Theodore came from Tarsus and had received a classical education in Antioch, which had a tradition of using rhetorical devices in the service of exegesis.³⁴ He also studied in Constantinople, where he received formal instruction in rhetoric.³⁵ Hadrian was a Greek-speaking North African, and both men were exceptionally learned in Greek and Latin (Theodore even knew Syriac).³⁶ There are no extant teaching manuals from the school, but considerable information on the teaching has been gleaned from glossaries and commentaries, and the accounts of former students.³⁷ The curriculum was extremely broad, and included metrics, astronomy, ecclesiastical computation, Roman law, and of course, scriptural exegesis.³⁸ But one subject that is conspicuous in its absence is rhetoric. In fact, a direct reference to oratory in one of the commentaries may give us an indication of the official aversion to the subject, for orators are described as *aliud dicentes et aliud sentientes* ('saying one thing and thinking another').³⁹

Poetic figures, however, were taught as an aid to scriptural

exegesis. The school's most famous *alumnus*, Aldhelm, mentions *poeticis figuris* as part of his studies.⁴⁰ And evidence of rhetorical learning is recorded in the exegetical commentaries on the Pentateuch and gospels, which represent students' notes taken from the *uiua uoce* explanations of the two Mediterranean masters.⁴¹ These commentaries show that Theodore and Hadrian frequently resorted to a rhetorical figure to explain a point in scripture.⁴² Thus, when interpreting 'and he called their name Adam' (*et uocauit nomina eorum Adam*, Genesis 5.2) the commentator resorts to the figure syllepsis to explain the incongruity between the singular *nomen*, and the plural recipients of that name (*eorum*).⁴³ Indeed, a host of Greek rhetorical terms (often applied loosely, and sometimes corrupted in transmission)⁴⁴ is enlisted to explain difficult expressions: anadiplosis, anastrophe, antapodosis, antiphrasis, antistrophe, cacemphaton, chleuasmoi, climax, hyperbole, metaphora, prolepsis and syllepsis.⁴⁵

Other evidence for the teaching of rhetorical figures comes from the *Leiden Glossary*, a manuscript copied c. 800 at St Gallen from a lost Anglo-Saxon exemplar, which has been shown to be a record of the classroom teaching at Canterbury.⁴⁶ It contains forty-eight batches of explanatory glosses, including one that consists of rhetorical devices, lemmata to the *Expositio psalmorum* of Cassiodorus.⁴⁷

So rhetorical figures were taught at Canterbury in the late seventh century. But the high level of learning was probably not maintained after the demise of the founders, since even by 731, Bede mythologizes the school of Theodore and Hadrian as a past golden age of learning, implying therefore that current standards have slipped.⁴⁸ There is nothing to suggest that the study of rhetoric long outlived the two teachers, and that a tradition of rhetorical learning was established in Canterbury.

Of course, the most widely cited evidence to support the case that Latin rhetoric was well known in England comes from Bede's writings. Surely we can assume that Old English poets would have been familiar with his classifications of Latin figures? Bede, the distinguished historian and theologian, was also expert in the study of schemes and tropes, and among his early works is the first significant treatise in Anglo-Saxon England on Latin rhetorical figures, *De schematibus et tropis* (written sometime between 691

and 703).⁴⁹ In this little textbook, which is appended to his influential handbook on metre, Bede catalogues seventeen schemes and thirteen tropes which he selected from Roman grammatical treatises, most notably from Book III of Donatus's *Ars maior*.⁵⁰ *De schematibus et tropis* is designed to teach the principles of Latin style, and is intended to serve not only as an introduction to the craft of poetry, but also as a grammatical aid to biblical exegesis.⁵¹

Nevertheless, Bede was no rhetor, and despite Roger Ray's claim that he knew the rhetorical writings of Cicero, nothing more than his familiarity with Latin figures has been proved.⁵² Nor is there any evidence to show that Bede's handbook inspired a renaissance of rhetorical learning in Anglo-Saxon England. *De schematibus et tropis* did eventually become widely influential: M.L. Laistner records no fewer than fifty English and continental manuscripts of the text.⁵³ But all these manuscripts date from the tenth century and later, when there was a revival in Latin learning (to which I shall return below), and we know nothing of its circulation in England beforehand.

In the eighth century, there is some evidence that rhetorical figures were taught in York, if we are to believe the remarks of an illustrious *alumnus*. In his epic poem *The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, Alcuin (d. 804) pays tribute to his benefactor and former teacher, Ælberht, archbishop of York, who in 778 had bequeathed him his books.⁵⁴ Alcuin lauds the teacher who 'watered parched hearts with diverse streams of learning and the varied dew of knowledge.'⁵⁵ He lists the liberal arts that were taught at York, and mentions rhetoric as part of the trivium.⁵⁶ The teacher is said to have provided his pupils with 'a flood of rhetorical eloquence' (*rhetoricae ... refruamina linguae*).⁵⁷ Some lines later, Alcuin lists forty authors whose works Ælberht bequeathed to him, and these include 'Cicero, the mighty orator' (*rhetor... Tullius ingens*, line 1550). From this account, then, it appears that in eighth-century York there was a school with a well-stocked library, where rhetoric was taught, perhaps as part of biblical exegesis.⁵⁸ However, some scholars have suggested that Alcuin's depiction may be exaggerated, merely a 'learned advertisement,' intended as an eloquent but inflated compliment to his benefactor.⁵⁹ In fact, both the description of the trivium and the catalogue of authors are highly stylized, and have been shown to be modelled on passages

from Venantius Fortunatus's *Vita S. Martini*.⁶⁰ The catalogue is also modelled on Isidore of Seville's description of his library in *Versus in bibliotheca*.⁶¹

Moreover, if Alcuin had access to Ciceronian rhetorical works, it is surprising that he never quotes from Cicero's rhetorical texts in the poem, nor in any other works written while still in York.⁶² And even if he did possess a copy of *De inuentione*, he eventually managed to ship his private book collection abroad sometime after his departure to the Continent (now thought to be around 786), and it is telling that *De inuentione* is never cited in York or anywhere else in England until Abbo of Fleury, who brought it to Ramsey at the end of the tenth century.⁶³

Of course, in his later treatise on rhetoric, his *De rhetorica* (c. 794), Alcuin does rely on Cicero's *De inuentione* and his *De oratore* (some-times mediated through the *Ars rhetorica* of Julius Victor).⁶⁴ *De rhetorica* has been described as the first medieval rhetorical textbook in the tradition of classical rhetoric.⁶⁵ But this work was not composed in England but at the Frankish court, and the sources could have been derived from Charlemagne's palace library.⁶⁶ And it is unlikely that Alcuin's treatise sparked a growth of rhetorical learning back home, as none of the forty-five surviving manuscripts is English.⁶⁷ So the *De rhetorica* should be considered not as an English text, but as belonging to Charlemagne's continental revival of learning.⁶⁸

One might expect that the discipline of rhetoric would have been revived in the latter half of the ninth century, as part of King Alfred's measures for cultural reform after the Viking ravages.⁶⁹ Indeed, Alfred translated Boethius's *De consolazione philosophiae*, a work that claims to employ 'the sweet persuasiveness of rhetoric' (*rhetoricae suadela dulcedinis*). But in Alfred's rendering, all that we find is the vague hope that the text's 'cure and drink' (*se læcedom and se drenc*) will work its effect on the reader.⁷⁰

The real revival in interest in grammar, and consequently, in rhetorical figures and tropes, occurred only in the late tenth century, presumably as a result of the revival of Latin learning in the monasteries (the Benedictine reform). This increased interest can be seen not just from the proliferation of manuscripts of Bede's work, but from a series of other works on the subject. Byrhtferth of Ramsey adapted Bede's figures into the vernacular in his

Enchiridion (c. 988–96);⁷¹ and Abbo of Fleury discussed the figures of style in his *Quaestiones grammaticales*, a grammatical manual presumably for the students at Ramsey, which he wrote during his sojourn of 985–7, and in which he quotes from the major rhetorical authority, Cicero's *De inuentione*.⁷² Some ten years later, Ælfric wrote a grammar in the vernacular, which contains analyses of schemes and tropes (lending the Old English term *hiw* the loan-meaning of *schema* or *figura*) and which draws on Bede and Donatus.⁷³ But it is questionable to what extent this renewed interest in rhetoric can bear on our question, since much Old English poetry is thought to date from before the late tenth century.⁷⁴

If, in light of the above discussion, we are now to assess the supposition that Anglo-Saxon poets were schooled in Latin rhetoric, we must conclude that the evidence to support such a claim is far from robust. It is clear that the discipline of formal rhetoric was not taught in England, and the classical rhetorical works were hardly known. Rhetorical figures were taught as a part of exegesis, but the evidence for that comes mostly from the earliest Anglo-Saxon period, before much of Old English literature is thought to have been composed. And there is little indication that the masters at Canterbury and at York initiated a sustained and flourishing tradition of teaching rhetorical figures. Anglo-Saxon poets could also have read about tropes and figures in grammatical works such as the those of Cassiodorus, Isidore, or Bede. But as we have seen, most of the indications for the reading of these works comes from the very beginning of the Anglo-Saxon era and from its end, and there is precious little evidence from the crucial period between the mid-eighth and mid-tenth century.

So the evidence is far too precarious to support the assumption that a tradition of rhetorical learning thrived in Anglo-Saxon England. We cannot simply take for granted that Anglo-Saxon poets read the books, learned the figures and their names, and recycled them in their own compositions. And it would thus be foolhardy to base the whole argument that Latin rhetoric influenced vernacular verse on such shaky grounds.

Nevertheless, it is evident, as various scholars have recognised, that Latin figures had some influence on the development of a vernacular poetic style.⁷⁵ Adeline Courtney Bartlett, for example,

found it ‘impossible to believe that the technique, any more than the subject matter, of Anglo-Saxon poetry remained uninfluenced by Latin models.’⁷⁶ Others – such as Jackson J. Campbell, Joseph Wine, and Gabriele Knappe – have claimed to have discovered particular Latin schemes and tropes in Old English verse.⁷⁷

There is thus a considerable gap between the undeniable presence of ‘Latin rhetorical patterns’ in Old English verse, and the lack of secure indications that the poets learnt these techniques in class or directly from Latin textbooks. If we are to bridge this gap, the first step we need to take is to abandon the tacit assumption that whenever, say, a poet reduplicates words at the beginning of a phrase, he is consciously employing ‘anaphora,’ and that he was therefore rhetorically trained.⁷⁸ Surely, poets could employ patterns without knowing their names, and without being acquainted with their role in the Latin rhetorical tradition.

As an extreme case in point, we can mention the bilingual poem known as the *Latin–Old English Proverbs*. Its lacklustre lines (ranked by Elliott Dobbie as ‘among the lesser literary remains of the late Anglo-Saxon period’) combine somewhat garbled Latin with unremarkable Old English:⁷⁹

Ardor frigesscit, nitor squalescit
amor abolescit, lux obtenebrescit.
Hat acolað, hwit asolað,
leof alaðaþ, leoht aðystrað.
Senescunt omnia que eterna non sunt.
Æghwæt forealdað þæs þe ece ne byð.

[Heat cools, brightness tarnishes, love ceases, light darkens. All things which are not eternal grow old.]

There is no question that the few lines of Old English verse here are influenced by the preceding Latin lines. We can see that the rhymes and antitheses of the Latin have been translated directly into Old English. But whether, as some scholars have implied, the author had really decided to sit down and pen a ‘sententia’ and consciously employ ‘studied homoeoteleuton’ and ‘isocolon’ is a moot point.⁸⁰

There is nothing wrong, of course, with using classical terms

like ‘isocolon’ merely as convenient *labels* for patterns in vernacular verse. For example, when the thirteenth-century Icelandic critic Ólafr Þorðarson wrote his *Málskrúðsfræði*, ‘the science of language ornament,’ he lent Latin terminology to the figures of Norse poetry, but he was not in any way suggesting that skalds were rhetorically trained, nor that patterns in skaldic verse were borrowed from Latin sources.⁸¹ Likewise, we should bear in mind that the burdening of a frail poem such as the *Latin–Old English Proverbs* with the full-blown apparatus of classical rhetoric is not tantamount to proof that the author had well-thumbed Latin rhetorical manuals to hand.

In fact, the *Latin–Old English Proverbs* makes it clear that a poet need not be rhetorically trained in order to spot Latin patterns, and to adapt them in the vernacular. And this simple truth can actually help bridge the gap between the undeniable presence of Latin figures in the poems, and the weak evidence for poets’ rhetorical schooling. Instead of searching for the Latin rhetorical texts that poets ought to have read, we can consider those Latin texts that we know *were* read. The favourite Latin authors in Anglo-Saxon England were none other than the Christian Latin poets of late Antiquity, such as Lactantius, Juvenius, Sedulius, Avitus, and Arator, all of whom were rhetorically trained. Building on the pioneering work of Andy Orchard and Michael Lapidge, I will try to show that vernacular poets’ close reading and absorption of works by Christian Latin authors could have exercised a much deeper influence on their own compositions than any diligent burrowing in Latin rhetorical manuals.⁸²

As I have already intimated above, the declared contempt of Christian authors towards the falsehoods of pagan rhetoric was to some extent a stance. Jerome may be famous for dismissing classical literature with the words: ‘what communion has light with darkness? What concord has Christ with Belial? What has Horace to do with the Psalter, Vergil with the Gospels and Cicero with the apostle?’⁸³ But his grandiose and over-zealous denunciation actually provides the best proof of the disingenuousness in Christianity’s hostility to pagan rhetoric. Latin literature is roundly condemned, but with what rhetorical panache! Rhetoric pours scorn on rhetoric: the antitheses are highlighted by anaphora and alliteration, the climactic contrast

between Paul and Cicero is lent urgency by the mounting brevity of phrases. Jerome's writings, in fact, have been shown to be imbued with classical learning and literature.⁸⁴ In reality, then, the conflict between Christianity and classical rhetoric seems to have been largely – rhetorical. Christian authors had to rely on some patterning to support their message. For, in Frank Kermode's phrase, 'the most arduous effort to express the poetry of plain sense brings with it its own metaphors, its own distortions.'⁸⁵ Christian writings thus reflect a pronounced ambivalence: denunciation of the mendacities of pagan authors on the one hand, and on the other, a deep indebtedness to the language of the very authors they professed to despise, the mainstay of their education and culture.⁸⁶

Some more moderate Christian authors were aware of this fact, and explicitly condoned rhetoric as a means of making the new religion palatable to a cultivated audience. In Book IV of *De doctrina Christiana*, Augustine paved the way for the use of figures in Christian texts by presenting rhetoric as merely a pragmatic instrument of persuasion, arguing that the faculty of eloquence is something neutral, which has great persuasive effect whether for good or for evil: 'Since rhetoric is used to give conviction to both truth and falsehood, who could dare to maintain that truth, which depends on us for its defence, should stand unarmed in the fight against falsehood? ... No; oratorical ability, so effective a resource to commend either right or wrong, is available to both sides; why then is it not acquired by good and zealous Christians to fight for the truth, if the wicked employ it in the service of iniquity and error, to achieve their perverse and futile purposes?'⁸⁷ Similarly, Lactantius recognised that if Christianity is to persuade, writers should grace its message with rhetorical figures, 'so that it steal more powerfully into men's minds' (*ut potentius in animos influat*).⁸⁸

The Christian Latin poets of late Antiquity, most of whom were rhetorically trained, belonged to this more tolerant camp.⁸⁹ And it was precisely their works that were most widely read and studied in Anglo-Saxon England, as Michael Lapidge and Andy Orchard have shown.⁹⁰ Among these, the most influential and widely read were the three curriculum poets Juvencus, Sedulius, and Arator. Their method of composition – the paraphrase (of biblical texts) –

has been shown to descend ultimately from a rhetorical exercise practised in Roman schools, where it was an essential part of the progymnasmata, those preliminary exercises designed to teach skill in composition.⁹¹ The paraphrase of the sacred text obviated the declared Christian hostility towards the falsehood of pagan literature and rhetoric. By insisting on the difference between content (*res*) and form (*uerba*), they could embrace Vergilian language and style, while leaving the biblical content unchanged.⁹²

The Spanish poet Juvencus rendered the gospel story into a close hexameter paraphrase (*Libri euangeliorum*, c. 330), fusing Christian inspiration with classical rhetoric in an effort to charm a cultivated audience.⁹³ Christ's grace shone upon him, Juvencus tells us, 'so that in my verses the glory of the divine law gladly received the earthly rhetorical adornments of language.'⁹⁴ Vergil's *arma uirumque cano* ('I sing of arms and a man') is reinterpreted here as *mihi carmen erit Christi uitalia gesta* ('My song will be the vital deeds of Christ'), and rather than calling on Apollo and the muses, Juvencus invokes the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.⁹⁵ Among Juvencus's admirers was Jerome – no champion of heretics – who even included him as the only poet in his chronicle of distinguished Christians.⁹⁶ The *Libri euangeliorum* was one of the staple texts in Anglo-Saxon libraries and was widely read throughout the period.⁹⁷

Juvencus's poem set the precedent for freer biblical paraphrases. In the fifth century, the Italian poet Caelius Sedulius drew on the *Libri euangeliorum* in his verse account of Christ's life, the *Carmen paschale*.⁹⁸ Sedulius, who was also well aware of the power of rhetorical 'voluptuousness' to woo an educated audience, had even bolder ambitions than those of his predecessor: he aimed to prise out the Bible's allegorical meaning.⁹⁹ His *Carmen paschale* was highly influential, and – paired with a later prose version of the poem – was the direct literary model for later Anglo-Latin 'twinned' works, such as Aldhelm's poetic and prose *De uirginitate*, and Bede's two *Lives of St Cuthbert*.¹⁰⁰ It has been shown that the *Carmen paschale* was a set-text in Anglo-Saxon schools.¹⁰¹ Its popularity is testified by the number of extant manuscripts and commentaries on the text, by the recording of the poem in the surviving book-lists, and by the frequent echoes of the poem in

Anglo-Latin literature.¹⁰²

The move from a literal rendering to an allegorical exposition reached its apogee in the *Historia Apostolica*, a poetic version of the Acts of the Apostles by Arator, the sixth-century Ligurian poet. Arator was the product of a revival of rhetorical education in northern Italy: he was trained by Ennodius, the renowned rhetorician (later Bishop of Pavia), and also by Deuterius, who taught grammar and rhetoric in Milan.¹⁰³ Arator famously gave a public reading of his biblical epic before Pope Vigilius, in 544.¹⁰⁴ His familiarity with Juvencus and Caelius Sedulius is everywhere apparent, and he also displays intimate knowledge of classical Latin authors such as Vergil, Ovid, Lucan, Statius, and Juvenal. As Neil Wright puts it, Arator was ‘one of the last representatives of a tradition of verse composition by native Latin speakers which stretched back to the second century BC.’¹⁰⁵ Like the *Libri euangeliorum* and the *Carmen paschale* before it, the *Historia Apostolica* thus provided a link between Anglo-Saxon England and the classical past, as both in style and structure it harked back to the preliminary rhetorical exercises (the paraphrase, simile, ecphrasis, and so on).¹⁰⁶ The poem was widely read, quoted, and closely studied throughout the whole Anglo-Saxon period. Aldhelm, for example, cites Arator throughout his writings on metre, *De metris* and *De pedum regulis*, praising him for his ‘poetic eloquence’ (*poetica facundia*).¹⁰⁷ Bede quotes Arator in his *De arte metrica*, and alludes to him freely in his verse *Life of St Cuthbert*, and elsewhere he acknowledges before all others his debt to Arator’s allegorical version of Acts in heroic poetry (*heroice carmine*).¹⁰⁸ The *Historia Apostolica* also appears to have been a set text on the Anglo-Saxon curriculum.¹⁰⁹

I tried to show in this chapter that the Christian Latin poets can help explain the presence of Latinate rhetorical devices in vernacular poetry. As we have seen, the historical evidence is too weak to show that Anglo-Saxons poets were rhetorically trained. We cannot even say with any confidence that they were well read in Latin rhetorical manuals. The main evidence for rhetorical learning begins to peter out by the ninth century, just when most vernacular verse is supposed to have been written. On the other hand, it is clear that Latin rhetorical devices did find their way into vernacular verse. I suggested that classical rhetorical patterns

might have seeped into Old English poetry through the medium of rhetorically trained authors such as Juvenecus, Sedulius, and Arator, whose works were saturated with Vergilian language and rhetorical figures. These poets are hardly known today, but they were widely read in Anglo-Saxon England, and vernacular poets could have acquired Latinate patterns by absorbing the rhetorical devices from their poems, and then recycling them in their own works.

In the following chapters, we shall examine this process of absorption and adaptation more closely. But before discussing the individual poems, we need to tackle the terminological problems that beset the study of rhetorical devices.

CHAPTER TWO

The Patterns of Latin and Vernacular Verse

Any study of rhetorical devices needs precise and agreed terms. But rhetorical terminology is a potential minefield: classical terms have a troubled ancestry of confusion rather than clarification. An inconsistent nomenclature had gained ground even by the Roman period, leading Quintilian to lament that ‘writers have given their names to all [patterns], but they are various, and suit the imagination of each author.’¹ This confusion persists today. On the one hand, terms such as ‘palillogia’ or ‘epanalepsis’ have each been used to describe several different schemes.² On the other hand, the same device is sometimes called by different names: ‘envelope pattern’ and ‘ring composition,’ for example, describe much the same pattern. The problem is exacerbated when one looks across different rhetorical traditions: what some scholars call ‘paroemia,’ and ‘litotes,’ are known to others as ‘gnomic saying,’ and ‘understatement.’³ One man’s ‘anaphora’ is another’s ‘repetition.’

The problem of classification, however, goes deeper than inconsistent terminology. Bestowing labels may create the illusion that a term defines a device uniquely and precisely. But in reality, the borders between different devices, especially aural ones, can be blurred, so that ‘different’ patterns can often overlap. We should always remember, therefore, that names are no more than convenient provisional labels. As a prime example of this problem, we can mention the distinction between ‘Latinate’ and ‘vernacular’ devices, which runs throughout this study. By drawing a dividing-line between borrowed ‘Latinate’ devices and inherited ‘vernacular’ ones, I do not wish to suggest that certain patterns are exclusively Latinate, while others are exclusively Old English. All patterns are potentially available to all poets (especially as some Anglo-Latin poets also composed Old English verse).⁴ And some patterns (such as punning) occur freely in both Latin and Old English verse. Nevertheless, devices may be said to be characteristic of a tradition if they are employed there more

frequently. So, for example, hyperbaton can be called ‘Latinate,’ because it is commonly used in Latin verse, and hardly ever appears in Old English. But the envelope pattern is a ‘vernacular’ pattern, because of its predominance in that tradition.

Bearing these caveats in mind, we can proceed warily to define the rhetorical patterns which will occupy us in later chapters, seeking always to describe rather than to impose strict limits. In the following discussion, I shall extract patterns from actual verse passages, rather than just listing devices according to rhetorical inventories, which probably played only a minor role in the dissemination of Latin patterns to Old English.

Rhetorical devices in Anglo-Latin verse

To examine the range of the Latinate rhetorical devices available to Anglo-Saxon poets, let us consider some paragraphs from Bede’s verse. The choice of Bede is apt, because he was steeped in Christian Latin poetry, and he had a deep first-hand knowledge of Vergil (even if his knowledge of other classical authors was not extensive).⁵ Bede’s teaching manual on rhetoric, the *De schematibus et tropis*, will also serve as the basis for most definitions used in this survey. Presumably, Bede employed the figures of Latin rhetoric consciously in his verse, as he practised what he preached. His rhetorical style was admired in Anglo-Saxon England, as is evident from the alliterative opening of a poem that precedes a copy of his *De arte metrica*: *Baeda dei famulus facundo famine fretus*: ‘Bede, the servant of God, confident in eloquent speech.’⁶

The passage we shall examine comes from Bede’s best-known Latin poem, the metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*, which was highly influential in Anglo-Saxon England as well as on the Continent.⁷ The poem is a verse paraphrase of a prose life of St Cuthbert by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne, and is modelled on the Christian Latin poets.⁸ Taken together with Bede’s later prose version of St Cuthbert’s Life, the poetic *Vita S. Cuthberti* forms a composite work, mirroring the *opus geminatum* (‘twinned work’) of Sedulius’s *Carmen* and *Opus paschale*.⁹ Arator’s influence can be detected in the format of the *Vita S. Cuthberti*, where each episode is headed by a prose *capitulum* and followed by an exegesis.¹⁰

The *Vita S. Cuthberti* is dense with rhetorical devices – a tribute to a saint famed for his eloquence.¹¹ The opening lines illustrate Christian eloquence: the apostles and Church Fathers convert the heathen through the power of the Word. The imagery of light not only recalls Christ as the *lux mundi* but also the Holy Spirit's visitation at Pentecost, when cloven tongues of fire came upon the disciples enabling them to speak in other languages, so that they might persuade the gentiles.¹² Even martyrdom is a rhetorical act here: Cyprian's death 'persuaded' (*suasit*). To borrow Bede's own tribute to Aldhelm, we might describe this figure-laden passage as *sermone nitidus*, 'sparkling in style'.¹³

Multa suis dominus fulgescere lumina saeculis
Donauit, tetricas humanae noctis ut umbras
Lustraret diuina poli de culmine flamma.
Et licet ipse deo natus de lumine Christus
Lux sit summa, deus sanctos quoque jure
lucernae 5
Ecclesiae rutilare dedit, quibus igne magistro
Sensibus instet amor, sermonibus aestuet ardor.
Multifidos uarium lichinos qui sparsit in orbem,
Ut cunctum noua lux fidei face fusa sub axem
Omnia sidereis uirtutibus arua
repleret. 10

Roma Petri Paulique jubar mirata gemellum
Gaudet apostolicis semper uictura tropheis.
Ast Asiae lucem uerbi serit ore Johannes,
Hauserat e domini quae pectore mystica ructans.
Bartholomeus eoa uolat per regna
triumphans, 15
Indomitosque armis lingua domat inclitus Indos.
Tu quoque Niliacos componens, Marce, furores
Sicca euangelicis satias de nubibus arua.
Affrica Cypriani dictis meritisque refulget,
Spernere delicias fuso qui sanguine
suasit. 20
Pictauis Hilario multum radiata magistro
Discutit errorum uera jam luce tenebras.
Constantinopolim Chrysostomus ille Johannes

Aurato nitidae lustrat fulgore loquela.
Nec jam orbis contenta sinu trans aequora
lampas

25

Spargitur effulgens, huiusque Britannia consors
Temporibus genuit fulgur uenerabile nostris,
Aurea qua Cuthbertus agens per sidera uitam
Scandere celsa suis docuit jam passibus Anglos.
Hunc uirtutis honor jam primo a limine
uitae

30

Aetheriumque decus signis comitatur apertis.
Cuius cuncta licet nequeam, tamen ultima malim
Commemorans operum uestigia tangere uersu,
Quis pateant interna sacrae fundamina mentis.

Tu, rogo, summe, iuuua, donorum spiritus
auctor,

35

Te sine nam digne fari tua gratia nescit;
Flammiumisque soles dare qui noua famina linguis,
Munera da uerbi linguae tua dona canenti.

[The Lord gave many lights to shine in their times, so that the divine flame from the summit of heaven would illumine the gloomy shades of human night. Although Christ himself, born from God who is the light, is the greatest light, God also gave saints rightly to redden as lamps of the Church, through whom, with fire as their teacher, love might press on our senses, ardour might burn in our speeches. He scattered their manifold lamps over the divers parts of the world, so that the new light of faith, poured from a torch under the whole heaven, might fill all the lands with heavenly powers [miracles]. Astonished Rome rejoices in the twin radiance of Peter and Paul, which will live forever by virtue of their apostolic monuments. And then in Asia, John sows with his speech the light of the Word, recounting those mysteries he had imbibed at the Lord's breast. Glorious Bartholomew speeds vanquishing through eastern kingdoms, and his tongue conquers the Indians, invincible with their weapons. You also, Mark, pacifying the Egyptian frenzies, saturate the dry lands with evangelical rain-clouds. Africa shines bright with the words and merits of Cyprian, who, by shedding blood, persuaded us to scorn pleasures. Poitiers, illumined by the teaching of Hilary, now dispels the darknesses

of errors with the true light. The John called Chrysostom illumines Constantinople with the golden brightness of his polished speech. Not even held in check by the coastline, the radiant lamp sheds its light overseas, and Britain, partaking of it, has in our own day produced an estimable lightning bolt: their Cuthbert, who, leading his life amidst splendid stars, has now taught the English to climb the heights, in his footsteps. Already from the first threshold of his life the honour and glory of virtue accompanied him with open signs. Although I cannot mention all his deeds, nevertheless, I would rather recall and relate in verse the foremost legacies of his works, in which the inward foundations of his sacred spirit are manifest. You, O supreme spirit, author of gifts, help me, I ask. For without you your grace knows not how to be fitly spoken; you who are accustomed to give new eloquence to flame-spewing tongues, bestow the faculty of speech on the tongue that is singing of your gifts.]

The passage gleams with rhetorical devices. As an example of **metaphor**, what Bede calls ‘the carrying-across of words and objects,’ there is the description of the saints as ‘lamps’ (*lucernae*, line 5).¹⁴ The opening lines are flecked with **alliteration** (what Bede calls ‘*paromoeon*,’ namely ‘when different words begin with the same letter’), for instance at the end of the opening section: ***fidei face fusa*** (line 9).¹⁵ We also find patterns that are especially characteristic of Latin verse, such as **hyperbaton**: the deliberate disruption of natural word-order, ‘climbing over, in which the normal arrangement of words has been thrown into disarray.’¹⁶ To avoid the jingling effect of juxtaposing words with the same inflections, nouns are separated from their modifying adjectives and pronouns: *multa ... lumina, suis ... saeculis*, line 1; *tetricas ... umbras* (line 2); *diuina ... flamma* (line 3). Other devices are especially characteristic of Christian Latin poets. For example, **leonine rhyme** (*uersus leonini*, or end-rhyme, in which the word before the caesura rhymes with the word at the end of the line) emphasizes in line 7 that the saints can inflame us with love and the gift of oratory, and is borrowed straight from Arator: *sensibus instet amor, sermonibus aestuet ardor*.¹⁷ This effect could also come under the broader heading of **homoeoteleuton** (or ‘like ending,’ the consonance between any endings in the line which have the

same inflection, even resulting from Latin accidentence).¹⁸ Under the term homoeoteleuton we can also include the chiming of inflections in line 7, between *sensibus ... sermonibus, instet ... aestuet*; the homoeoteleuton here is highlighted by the line's alliterating symmetry.

The opening section (lines 1–10) is followed by a list of evangelists, apostles and patriarchs, and their deeds both martial and rhetorical. In line 16, Bartholomew's victory over the Indians is highlighted by **paronomasia**, defined as 'word-play ... when words that are very similar, namely a letter or a syllable is different, are used in a different sense.'¹⁹ To highlight the adversary's might, word-play encloses the whole line (*indomitosque ... Indos*). But with Bartholomew's conquering eloquence the enemy is divided, for with the insertion of *domat* ('conquers') not only does the line gain a strikingly chiasitic ring (*indomitosque ... domat ... Indos*), but the foe that was reputedly 'indomitable' (*indomitosque*) is routed (*domat ... Indos*), reduced merely to a defeated people.

Bede honours Mark's eloquence with an **apostrophe**, a direct address (line 17). By referring to Mark's enemies as *Niliacos* ('belonging to the Nile' = Egyptians), Bede is employing **synecdoche**, an expression which 'either represents the whole by a part ... or the reverse.'²⁰ This device fits into the wider category of **metonymy**, 'change of names,' when the name of one thing is substituted for another thing which is closely related to it.²¹ In line 18, Mark's eloquence is complimented with an allusion to the classical **topos** of streaming eloquence: 'you who saturate the dry earth with evangelical rain-clouds' (*sicca euangelicis satias de nubibus arua*). Even the syntax, with the 'dry earth' enclosing the eloquent 'rain-clouds,' stresses Mark's persuasive powers. To emphasize the eloquence of Cyprian, Bede echoes a line from Aldhelm, but he also bestows on him a **zeugma**, 'a yoking ... when a number of dependent constructions are completed either by a single verb or by a single clause.'²² Here, the zeugma holds Cyprian's 'words and merits' (*dictis meritisque*, line 19) responsible for the fact that Africa 'shines' (*refulget*). In the reference to St Hilary of Poitiers, the contrast between pagan darkness and Christian light is illustrated by **antithesis** (a figure in which contrasting words or ideas are balanced in opposition).²³ The

antithetical arrangement of *luce tenebras*, which occurs right at the end of the description and at the end of the line (22), marks Hilary's success in vanquishing heresy.

Patriarchal eloquence is highlighted most dramatically in the description of John Chrysostom of Constantinople. Bede lends a whole line (23) to his name, and then illustrates it with **onomastic paronomasia** (word-play on a name).²⁴ In line 24, the first four words (*aurato nitidae lustrat fulgore*) refer to light, and the last to language (*loquela*), thereby playing on the Greek meaning of 'Chrysostom': 'golden-tongued.' Even the syntax suggests Chrysostom's name and rhetorical gifts, for the whole line is framed with an allusion to 'golden-tongued': *aurato ... loquela* ('golden ... speech'). Chrysostom radiates eloquence in the very act of evangelizing, for *lustrare* can mean both 'shine' and 'wander,' a **pun** that is also found in Arator and Boniface.²⁵ It is also rather apt that Bede is employing the **golden line** here, the separation of two adjectives (*aurato, nitidae*) from their associated nouns (*fulgore, loquela*) by a medial verb (*lustrat*), a device that Bede describes as 'the best and most beautiful arrangement of a dactylic hexameter verse.'²⁶ This device carries with it a weight of classical prestige, as befitting the 'golden-tongued' saint whose Christian oratory is so fired with rhetoric. The images of light fall eventually on St Cuthbert, the 'venerable flash of lightning' (*fulgur uenerabile*). Chrysostom's eloquence illuminates the English saint through the **paralleling** of *aurato* (line 24) with *aurea* (line 28), and of *fulgore* (line 24) with *fulgur* (line 27). The passage is brought to a close by a kind of **chiasmus** (parallelism in reverse order). Echoing Juvenius, Bede invokes the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: the line *munera da uerbi linguae tua dona canenti* (38), which is almost symmetrical in its arrangement, mirrors Bede's conviction that it is God who is the origin and end of rhetoric.

A few other rhetorical devices should be mentioned, although they are only found elsewhere in the poem. In the subsequent account of St Cuthbert's miracles, rhetoric still plays a vital role, for Bede (like Arator) is concerned more with the figural significance of the event than with the event itself.²⁷ For example, the account of how the monks' rafts are nearly swept out to sea and then saved by Cuthbert's prayer ([chapter 3](#)) opens with an **ecphrasis**, that is, a digressive passage describing an object of

beauty, such as an ideal landscape, often introduced by *est locus* (line 97).²⁸ In order to illustrate the power of Cuthbert's prayer, the passage is also ornamented by a **simile**, 'a comparison between things which are different in kind':²⁹ the drifting boats move 'like a bird' or 'like a winged creature' (*uelut aliger*, line 103).

A well-known passage (chapter 8) is the account of Cuthbert's nightly excursions to the sea, where he stands submerged to his neck, chanting hymns. As he is recovering on shore, sea otters come to lick him warm, as proof of his sanctity. Michael Lapidge has shown that this account is decorated by **hypallage** (a transferred epithet): an adjective that should describe Cuthbert's nightly hymn-singing, *nocturnus*, is transferred to Cuthbert himself, the 'nocturnal young man' (*iuuenis ... nocturnus*, line 220).³⁰ Elsewhere (chapter 7), Bede describes how Cuthbert unwittingly entertained an angel. An unexpected guest arrives in wintertime, and the harshness of the weather is emphasized by **polysyndeton** ('when clauses are connected by multiple conjunctions').³¹ To depict the bitter cold, conjunctions pile up: *ne frigusque famesque niuosaque flabra Decembris / ingeminent* ('lest the cold, and the hunger, and the snowy blasts of December should increase,' lines 191–2). Bede then tells us how Cuthbert goes to fetch bread for his guest, and in the meantime the visitor departs, leaving behind him a miraculous fragrance, three fresh loaves, but no footprints in the snow. Cuthbert breaks into a chorus of wonder:

Pascere, non pasci ueniens et fercula portans
 Qualia non surgunt nostrae de germine messis.
 Lilia nec candent nec sic rosa fulgida flagrat.
 Nostraque mannifluo spernuntur mella sapore.
 Non haec ergo meus tosto de uiscere
 fornax
 210
 Sed, paradise, tuus gignit sacra munere fructus

[Coming to feed, not to be fed, and carrying dishes, the likes of which do not rise from the seed of our harvest. Lilies are not so white, nor does the shining rose flame in this way. Our honey is scorned with its dripping flavour, and consequently, neither does my oven bring forth these things from its scorched insides, but paradise, your fruit graciously brings forth its sacred things.]

The passage is marked by **polyptoton**: the play on several morphological derivations of the same root, or ‘when the same word is used in different cases.’³² As the rules of hospitality have been reversed, and the guest has honoured his host, a pattern of polyptoton describes the angel ‘coming to feed, not to be fed’ (*pascere, non pasci ueniens*), echoing Sedulius (*Carmen paschale*, III, line 3). In the apostrophe to paradise there is a loose kind of **anaphora**, defined by Bede as *relatio* (‘carrying back’): ‘when the same word or phrase is repeated twice, or more often, at the beginning of verses.’³³ The two particles *non* and *nec* are repeated, but here the anaphora is slightly disrupted, as the repetitions do not always occur at the beginning of clauses or lines. This pattern is combined with **hyperbole**: ‘an expression that exceeds credibility, in order to extol, or to diminish.’³⁴ To emphasize the extraordinary gift of bread, the loaves are described as whiter than lilies, more startling than a rose, tastier than honey. This hyperbole is combined with a variation on a wider pattern, the **inexpressibility topos**, which often depicts heaven or paradise first by listing what is *not* there (usually marked by anaphora of negative markers), resolving in a vision of what is there (usually introduced by a concessive relation, such as *sed*).³⁵

Of course, the rhetorical devices I have focused on here are not the only ones employed by Latin poets. But they are the most common and important figures, which will feature most prominently in the discussion in the following chapters.

Patterns in Old English Verse

No vernacular rhetorical manuals survive from Anglo-Saxon England. In the poetry itself, there are no more than a handful of references to verse-making.³⁶ But various scholars have identified patterns in vernacular verse, and we can sketch its salient characteristics on this basis. To demonstrate patterns in vernacular poetry, we can look at a passage from an Old English saint’s life, *Andreas*. As a whole, this poem is based on a lost Latin source, and so its suitability for our purposes might be questioned. However, we can tell (from surviving Latin analogues) that the passage chosen here is not a translation of the source, but a free ‘digression,’ modelled on a passage from a vernacular poem rather

than a Latin source: Grendel's attack on Heorot.³⁷ It is a showpiece of a vernacular art.

Andreas is sometimes attributed to Cynewulf.³⁸ The poet certainly adopts a Cynewulfian theme in his account of the evangelists' adventures, in this case, Andrew and Matthew.³⁹ In the final triumph over evil, St Andrew calls forth a flood from a stone. Streams and flames surge over the heathen Mermedonians, in imagery that suggests baptism, the drowning of Pharaoh's hosts, and Doomsday.⁴⁰ To increase the dramatic effect, there is an ironic twist: whereas in *Beowulf*, Grendel attacks the heathen Danes after the feasting and mead-drinking, here drunkenness is the onslaught itself.⁴¹

Stream ut aweoll,
fleow ofer foldan; famige walcan
mid ærdæge eorðan
þehton, 1525
myclade mereflod. Meoduserwen wearð
æfter symbeldæge; slæpe tobrugdon
searuhæbbende. Sund grunde onfeng,
deope gedrefed; duguð wearð afyrhted
þurh þæs flodes fær. Fæge
swulton, 1530
geonge on geofene guðræs fornam
þurh sealtes swelg; þæt wæs sorgbyrþen,
biter beorþegu. Byrlas ne gældon,
ombehtþegnas; þær wæs ælcum genog
fram dæges orde drync sona
gearu. 1535
Weox wæteres þrym. Weras cwanedon,
ealde æscherend; wæs him ut myne
feon fealone stream, woldon feore beorgan,
to duns-cræfum drohtað secan,
eorðan ond wist. Him þæt engel
forstod, 1540
se ða burh oferbrægd blacan lige,
hatan heaðowælme; hreoh wæs þær inne
beatende brim. Ne mihte beorna hloð
of þam fæstenne fleame spowan;
wægas weoxon, wadu

hlynsodon,	1545
flugon fyrgnastas, flod yðum weoll.	
Ðær wæs yðfynde innan burgum	
geomorgidd wrecen, gehðo mændan	
forhtferð manig, fusleoð golon.	
Egeslic æled eagsyne	
wearð,	1550
heardlic hereteam, hleoðor gryrelic;	
þurh lyftgelac leges blæstas	
weallas ymbwurpon, wæter mycladon.	

[A stream welled out and flowed over the earth. Foamy waves covered the ground at dawn; the sea-flood mounted. After a day of feasting came a pouring out of mead. The warriors awoke. Deeply stirred, the ocean took hold of the land. The troop was terrified by the flood's sudden attack. Doomed men died; the waves' battle-rush overwhelmed the young men in the ocean, through the swallowing of salt-water. That was a brewing of sorrow, a bitter beer-drinking. The cup-bearers, the attendant thanes, did not linger. Right from the break of day there was enough ready drink for everyone. The water's power grew. They were lamenting, the men, the ancient spear-bearers. It was their intention to flee the dark stream; they wanted to protect their lives, to seek a new existence in hill-caves, the support of the earth. An angel blocked that from them; he covered the citadel with flashing fire, a roasting battle-billow. The pounding flood was stormy in there. The band of men were not able to flee with any success from that fortress. The waves grew, the water roared, sparks of fire flew, the flood welled with waves. It was an easy matter to find inside the dwellings there the uttering of a mournful lament. Many a stout-hearted warrior mourned and grieved, chanting a death-song. The terrible fire-brand grew visible, a harsh devastation, a horrible sound. Following the air-battle, the blasts of fire surrounded the walls, the water rose.]

The whole passage is awash with poetic effects. **Assonance** (the resemblance or correspondence of sounds in different words) depicts the flood's overwhelming force: we can almost hear the sound of the waves engulfing the ground in *sund grunde onfeng*.⁴²

A swelling assonance (along with alliteration) runs throughout the passage, from the opening description of the welling stream (*aweoll / fleow ofer foldan ... walcan*), through to the waves' danger (*flodes fær fæge*), the Mermedonians' desire to flee (*fleon fealone ... feore beorgan*), the force of fire and flood (*flugon fyrgnastas flod ... weoll*), leading to the collapse of the city's walls (*weallas ... wæter*).

The imagery of fire and flood is heightened by **ornamental alliteration**. Broadly speaking, a sequence of alliteration can be called ornamental when it is not confined to the structural principle of Old English poetry, whereby one stressed syllable in the first half line must alliterate with the first stressed syllable of the second half line.⁴³ For example, nearly every line in this passage contains a type of ornamental alliteration known as **double alliteration** (AAAx, where A represents alliterating stressed syllables, and x represents a non-alliterating stressed syllable).⁴⁴ Interwoven with assonance are strings of **interlinear alliteration**: *on feng/ [gedre fed] ... afyrhted / ... flodes fær. Fæge / ... [geofene] ... fornam* (lines 1528-31; the square brackets mark what John Pope has called 'the alliteration of minor syllables').⁴⁵ Another alliterative chain highlights the ironic image of drowning as beer-drinking: *sorgbyrþen, / biter beorþegu. Byrlas ne gældon, / [ombehtþegnas]* (lines 1532-1534a).

The passage is also swamped with repetitions. On the one hand, we find the same idea is repeated with different words: 'water' is expressed as *stream, walca, mereflod, sund, flod, geofon, sealt, drync, wæter, brim, yðum*. On the other hand, the same word (sometimes in different derivations) is repeated to imply different facets of an idea. This pattern is known as **echoic repetition**.⁴⁶ For example, the repetition of *ærdæge ... symbeldæge ... dæges* not only links lines aurally, but also connects the time of feasting (*symbeldæge*) with the time of horror, the ensuing destruction before dawn (*ærdæge*). Like assonance and alliteration, echoic repetition can pinpoint an atmosphere or mood, as for example in the repeated lashing of 'flood': *mereflod ... flodes ... flod* (lines 1526, 1530 and 1546). A sister pattern is **paronomasia**, the play on unrelated but similar-sounding words, which suggests some semantic connection.⁴⁷ For example, the paronomasia on *yðym* ('waves') and *yðfynde* ('easy to find') implies that as a consequence of the flood, misery is inevitable. There are also a number of **puns**, such

as the appropriate ambivalence of *walcan* (line 1524): ‘wave’ or ‘attack’?⁴⁸ Likewise, *hloð* (line 1543b) could mean ‘troop of men’ or ‘spoil,’ suggesting that the Mermedonians have indeed fallen prey to the waves.

Repetition can also play an organisational role. In **incremental repetition**, one or more words are repeated along with new material, forming ‘a series of more or less parallel steps which have a cumulative force,’ to quote Adeline Courtney Bartlett.⁴⁹ Within this passage, the phrase *weox wæteres þrym* (‘the force of the water grew greater,’ line 1536a) is repeated incrementally: *wægas weoxon*, *wadu hlynsodon*, (‘the waves grew stronger, the water roared,’ line 1545). The pattern generates suspense by marking the flood’s inexorable rise. A framing device is the **envelope pattern**, defined by Bartlett as ‘any logically unified group of verses bound together by the repetition at the end of (1) words or (2) ideas or (3) words and ideas which are employed at the beginning.’⁵⁰ I will adopt the term ‘envelope pattern’ in this book, although other scholars have preferred different names for this device: Carol Braun Pasternack describes the pattern as a ‘movement’ (a borrowing from musical vocabulary),⁵¹ and Jack Niles calls it ‘ring composition’ (showing its importance to the compositional method of *Beowulf*).⁵² In our passage, two overlapping envelope patterns organise the passage and stake out its imagery. The first outlines the pictures of the rising tide: *stream ut aweoll* (line 1523b) ... *flod yðum weoll* (line 1546b). The second adds weight to this image: *myclade mereflod* (line 1526a) ... *wæter mycladon* (line 1553b). Along with **end-rhyme** (*ymbwurpon* ... *mycladon*, line 1553), these repetitions round off the description.⁵³

One sign that this passage is a flourish of vernacular art is the density of **compounds**: there are no fewer than sixteen within some thirty lines.⁵⁴ Seven are **hapax legomena** (words which occur only once in the corpus);⁵⁵ and a metaphorical compound such as *heaðowælme* (‘battle-billow’) may also be described as a **kenning**.⁵⁶ While poetic compounds are traditional, they also allow the poetic imagination free rein, for in juxtaposing one word with another, a fresh meaning is implied. Compounds can enrich the verse by their ambivalence: the kenning *heaðowælme* (literally: ‘battle-billow’) could allude either to the flood or to the flames, since in Cynewulfian verse, *wylm* can mean either a surge of water

or of fire.⁵⁷ Compounds may also be used for allusive effect beyond their immediate role in the passage; for example, the much-discussed *meoduscerwen* ('mead-dispensing'?) recalls *ealuscerwen* from *Beowulf* ('ale-dispensing'?, line 769a), where it seems to be a metaphor for sorrow. Thus *meoduscerwen* alludes both to the welling of misery and of the flood.⁵⁸ This metaphor is later reinforced by **variation** (or 'apposition'): the restatement of a word or a phrase in different words.⁵⁹ Two compounds, *sorgbyrþen* ('sorrow-brewing') and *biter beorþegu* ('bitter beer-drinking') are set in apposition to one another (and connected alliteratively), thus implying that drink brings grief. In the next line, variation further emphasises this irony, as the drowning Mermedonians, the 'attendant thanes,' *ombehtþegnas* (line 1534a), are cast as 'cup-bearers,' *byrlas* (line 1533b). The grim joke is clinched by the following **understatement**: 'right from the day's beginning there was enough ready drink for everyone' (*þær wæs ælcum genog / fram dæges orde drync sona gearu*, lines 1534–5).

There are also a few other patterns which we should mention briefly, although they do not appear in the passage. The **doublet**, or word pair, is found widely in Old English poetry and prose.⁶⁰ Doublets usually involve finite verb pairs, and their emphasis is often reinforced by rhythm and alliteration, as for example in *weaxeð ond wridað* ('grows and thrives,' *Beowulf*, line 1741a); *forgyteð ond forgymeð* ('forgets and neglects,' *Beowulf*, line 1751a); *forsiteð ond forsworced* ('grows dim and grows dark,' *Beowulf*, line 1767a).⁶¹ Another device is the **apo koinou** construction, the use of a word or phrase to refer both back to the preceding clause and ahead to the following clause.⁶² A phrase such as *swa cwæð* ('spoke thus,' *The Wanderer*, lines 6 and 111) can be understood apo koinou, since it can refer to either the preceding or following speech.⁶³ A common characteristic of vernacular verse is the **gnomic saying**, a sententious statement that promotes a general truth, and usually depends on the verbs *sceal* ('shall,' 'ought') or *biþ* ('is').⁶⁴ The saying *lofdædum sceal / in mægþa gehwære man geþeon* ('in every nation, a man ought to thrive by praiseworthy deeds,' *Beowulf*, lines 24b–25), rounds off a section of verse by presenting an apparently irrefutable truth.

Finally, vernacular verse is **hypermetric** when half-lines are expanded to contain more than two stressed syllables.⁶⁵ We can

take as an example two such ‘stretched’ lines from *Andreas*: *sneome of slæpe þæm fæstan. Het hie to þam siðe gyrwan, / faran to frean dome. Sceoldon hie þam folce gecyðan* (lines 795–6). Not only do these unusually long lines serve to highlight the description of God and Creation that follows, but they are also tied thematically to the poem’s later instance of hypermetricity (lines 1022b–1023), another passage which signifies the Harrowing of Hell.⁶⁶

The range of patterns of Old English poetry, most of which we have seen above, provide much of the profundity and pleasure of traditional verse. In the following chapter, we shall see how the two streams, Latin rhetoric and vernacular style, converge in the allegory of *The Phoenix*.

CHAPTER THREE

The Figure of *The Phoenix*

At first glance, *The Phoenix* looks much like any other Old English poem: it opens with an ornamental initial, it is written in an Insular hand, and is preserved in the leaves of that celebrated vernacular miscellany, the Exeter Book.¹ *The Phoenix* bears all the hallmarks of formulaic style, so much so that it is often associated with the beast fables known as the Old English *Physiologus*,² and was once thought to have been composed by Cynewulf.³ But these conventional English features belie *The Phoenix*'s origins in Latin literature. For the poem describes that fabulous creature of the classical imagination, the fire-bird, and tells of its life in an idyllic land, its death in the flames, and its rising again from the ashes.⁴ Of all vernacular poems, *The Phoenix* is the most directly influenced by classical myth and Roman rhetoric.

The poem falls into two parts. The first half (lines 1–380), the story of the phoenix's life-cycle, is a close rendering of a late Latin poem by Lactantius, a renowned rhetorician.⁵ The latter half (lines 381–677) is a freer composition that relies only loosely on an eclectic selection of Latin sources.⁶ In this part, the poet is at pains to spell out the allegorical significance of the first part. The two halves join to form what Eric Stanley has called 'the longest example of sustained allegory in Old English poetry.'⁷ As we shall see, it is rhetorical figures, more than any explicit exegesis, that link the poem's halves and underscore its *gastlice andgit*, 'spiritual meaning.' Two central sections in the poem will be the focus of our attention in this chapter, as they are especially rich in borrowed and native patterns: the vision of the grove, and the phoenix's rebirth in the flames.

The first half of *The Phoenix* is a close rendering of the *Carmen de aue phoenice* ('Poem on the Phoenix-bird') by Lactantius (c. 240–c. 320).⁸ Unfortunately, facts about Lactantius's life are few and far

between.⁹ We know that he was a Latin-speaking Christian from the Roman province of North Africa (then a heartland of Latin culture), and that he studied rhetoric in Sicca Veneria with Arnobius. Around 302, Diocletian appointed Lactantius as professor of Latin rhetoric in Nico-media, the capital of the eastern Roman empire. But Lactantius soon resigned his position and returned to the West. He was eventually called out of retirement to join Constantine's court in Augusta Treverorum (today's Trier) in Gaul, to teach Latin letters to Crispus, the emperor's son. Lactantius has always been widely admired as a distinguished rhetorician, one who combined Christian teaching with classical rhetoric in 'a stream of Ciceronian eloquence' (*fluuius eloquentiae Tullianae*), in Jerome's words.¹⁰ His elegant style was revered by the Renaissance humanists: Petrarch described him as 'rolling forth in a milky torrent,' punning on his name,¹¹ and Pico della Mirandola went so far as to dub him 'the Christian Cicero' (*Cicero Christianus*).¹²

Lactantius is also highly regarded as a rhetorical theorist. His radical views on the function of figures were influential in resolving the tensions between classical letters and Christianity that were voiced so vehemently by Jerome and others. As we have seen, Lactantius realized that a cultured audience would only be convinced by Christianity if the new religion was defended rationally and elegantly from within the framework of Latin learning.¹³ From the outset of the *Diuinae institutiones*, his principal prose work, Lactantius establishes his credentials as a rhetorician qualified to 'plead the case for truth.'¹⁴ Throughout, biblical references are scarce, and instead he draws on those paragons of Latin eloquence: Vergil, Ovid, and Cicero. For as this consummate orator realized, it is not the truth itself that persuades, but its rhetorical grace.¹⁵ The wise and the learned and the leaders of this world, Lactantius says,¹⁶

nihil audire uel legere nisi expolitum ac disertum uolunt nec
quicquam haerere animis eorum potest nisi quod aures
blandiore sono mulcet

[... wish to hear or read nothing unless it is polished and
eloquent, nor can anything cling to their minds except what
caresses their ears with rather seductive sound.]

Lactantius even argues that pagan poetry conceals Christian truths, and claims that ancient myths and passages from scripture are really one and the same – no more than symmetrical expressions of divine revelation: ‘those things that poets say are therefore true, but in allegorical dress, and veiled in appearance.’¹⁷ Elsewhere, in a punning reference to the colours of rhetoric, he explicitly characterizes poetic allegory – *figura* – as that which covers spiritual meaning: ‘... *ea quae gesta sunt figura et quasi uelamine aliquo uersicolore praetexas*’ (‘you cover over those things which have happened with a figure of speech, and, as it were, a veil of divers colours’).¹⁸ Lactantius is thus one of the first apologists to recommend poetic allegory – ‘other speaking’ – as a way of promoting the Christian message.¹⁹

Lactantius’s views are manifest in his influential *Carmen de aue phoenice* (which was available in Alcuin’s library, and appears to have been studied in Anglo-Saxon schools).²⁰ The *De aue phoenice* is a lyric in elegiac couplets (alternating hexameters and pentameters) that relates the antique legend of the phoenix.²¹ The poem bears all the trappings of classical high style. Echoes of the Latin poets resound, especially Ovid and Vergil.²² The lines abound with classical allusions: to Deucalion’s flood and Phaethon’s scorching of the earth, and to pagan deities such as Venus and Apollo, Flora and Aeolus. There is frequent use of classical rhetorical figures, especially anaphora, hyperbaton, apostrophe, paronomasia, and syllepsis.

Nevertheless, beyond the classical motifs and devices lies a deeper Christian meaning: an account of the resurrection turned *in alias species*, ‘into other representations.’²³ Even the gods have become decorative devices, as the numinous gives way to the poetic. Various clues suggest that Lactantius is drawing on the established associations between the rebirth of the phoenix and Christ’s resurrection.²⁴ For example, the phoenix’s millennial life-span recalls the chiliastic doctrine, the notion that at Doomsday, Christ will come to reign on earth for a thousand years.²⁵ The fountain of ‘living water’ in the phoenix’s grove probably alludes to the streams of paradise and the waters of baptism.²⁶ And the phoenix’s flight from the grove sounds similar to Adam’s expulsion from paradise, as portrayed elsewhere in Lactantius’s writings.²⁷ But in the *De aue phoenice*, the Christian meaning is never made

explicit. The connections always remain on the level of suggestion, as the poem inveigles the reader to elicit parallels between the phoenix story and the life of Christ.

Rhetorical devices are also employed as a kind of code, opening up another level of allusion. The paradox of the resurrection, for example, is evoked through the antitheses surrounding the phoenix's rebirth. The pressure on classical figures to denote the Christian message becomes clear in the last few lines of the poem, which echo Ovid but also Lactantius's more overtly Christian writings.²⁸ Here, parallel phrasing, leonine rhyme, and a string of cryptic devices – paradox, chiasmus, antithesis, and metonymy – accumulate to suggest the mystery of rebirth. But it is only in the very last line of the poem that the Christian meaning becomes more obvious, when Lactantius mentions 'eternal life' (*aeternam uitam*), a phrase that rings with Christian significance:²⁹

Mors illi Venus est, sola est in morte
uoluptas: 165
Ut possit nasci, appetit ante mori.
Ipsa sibi proles, suus est pater et suus heres,
Nutrix ipsa sui, semper alumni sibi.
Ipsa quidem, sed non eadem est, eademque nec ipsa est
Aeternam uitam mortis adepta
bono. 170

[Her Venus ['desire'] is death; her only pleasure is in death. So that she can be born, she desires first to die. She is her own child, her own father and heir; she is always her own nurse and her own nursling. Indeed, she is herself, but not the same bird; and she is the same bird, but not herself. Through the goodness of death she has obtained everlasting life.]

The poem thus requires (in the words of Jacques Fontaine) a 'double lecture'.³⁰ While savouring its refined poetic art, the reader is drawn into accepting the allegorical truths hidden in its *obliquae figurationes*.³¹ Lactantius's fiction does not 'lie,' but rather wraps up doctrine in an elaborately feigned composition, for as Lactantius explains, 'a carefully composed poem and rhetorical prose flowing with sweetness captivates souls, and pushes them

where it wants.’³²

How could this highly literary and allusive method of persuasion be turned into the staff and staple of vernacular verse? The Old English poet realized, of course, what some nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars did not, namely that the *Carmen de aue phoenice* is deeply Christian.³³ But this poet was writing in a different tradition from Lactantius, and for a different market. He was not aiming to flatter a Mediterranean readership, thoroughly versed in classical literature and rhetoric, but rather seeking to inspire a Christian audience educated in Anglo-Saxon monasteries and cathedral schools. He could not simply transfer Lactantius’s subtle classical allusions and double entendres to the idiom of traditional Old English verse. The Christian allegory thus had to be made more explicit, without compromising the translation’s faithfulness. The poet’s solution to this dilemma is recourse to the grammatical method of exegesis and a bipartite structure:³⁴ a close rendering of *De aue phoenice* is presented in the poem’s first half (lines 1–380), and is then linked to an exegetical part: a series of explicit interpretations in the second half (lines 381–677). The poem’s Christian significance is reinforced by this structure, as it mirrors and may have been inspired by the construction of Arator’s allegory, as well as the Old English *Physiologus* and homilies. In Arator’s biblical paraphrase, literal narrative is followed by poetic exegesis.³⁵ The allegories of the Old English *Physiologus* also first paraphrase a Latin-derived beast fable, and then interpret its allegorical significance. Likewise, prose vernacular homilies typically comprise a Latin-based peri-cope, followed by its exegesis.³⁶ In adopting the bipartite structure, then, the *Phoenix*-poet demonstrates that this poem is a ‘two-fold story,’ a *bispel*.

The freer second half enables the poet to deviate dramatically from Lactantius’s method of discreet implication. A biblical quotation is enlisted, in order to support the veracity of this explicit allegory.³⁷ The poet paraphrases Job 29.18, where the prophet foretells his death in his nest and compares the multiplication of his days to the longevity of the phoenix.³⁸ And as if to remove any doubts about the underlying truth of the allegory, the quotation is prefaced by a self-justifying aside:

Ne wene þæs ænig ælda cynnes

þæt ic lygewordum leoð somnige,
write woðcræfte
546–548a)

(lines

[Let no one believe that I am composing my poem and
writing my verse with lying words]

While such an authorial aside is rare in Old English verse, the *Phoenix*-poet is echoing here the protestations of Christian Latin writers.³⁹ Juvenecus, for example, proclaims that his poetic paraphrase is true, unlike the classical fictions which ‘associate lies with the deeds of the ancients’ (*quae ueterum gestis hominum mendacia nectunt*, praefatio, line 16). Sedulius also assures us that he is not lying, unlike the pagans’ ‘many lies’ (*plurima ... mendacia*, Book I, line 22). The same sentiment can be found in some vernacular prose translations, for example in King Alfred’s tale of Orpheus and Eurydice: ‘we do not begin these parables and allegories out of a love of false tales,’ Alfred says, ‘but because we desire therewith to signify the truth, and would like it to be of profit to our listeners.’⁴⁰ The *Phoenix*-poet’s aside also provides literary validation, not only through the direct reference to the act of authorship, *ic ... somnige* (‘I compose’), but also by altering an earlier formulaic phrase, *wrixleð woðcræfte* (‘modulates verse,’ line 127a) to a distinctly ‘lettered’ version, *write woðcræfte* (‘write verse,’ line 548a).

The more overt nature of the *Phoenix*-poet’s Christian message does not mean, of course, that he fails to recognize the power of subtle persuasion. We shall see that many devices are borrowed directly from the Latin source. Nevertheless, in the Old English, they no longer look so ostentatiously learned, but are designed to sink more unobtrusively into the audience’s consciousness: they are meant to be heard. And if in Lactantius’s poem rhetorical ornaments usually mask Christian truth, in *The Phoenix*, figures play a structural and symbolic role. Sometimes figures actually come to stand for spiritual mysteries, by expressing ‘inexpressible’ Christian themes. Most crucially, however, patterns serve the Christian lesson by binding together the poem’s two parts: the narrative and the exegesis.

The two poets' different attitudes to the art of persuasion are clear from the beginnings of their poems, as both anchor their works firmly in their own traditions. Lactantius's opening hexameter describes a marvellous grove, far-flung in the Orient:

Est locus in primo felix oriente
remotus (line 1)

[There is a blessed far-off place in the distant east]

The initial phrase, *est locus*, announces an ecphrasis, a highly stylized description of an ideal landscape. Such an opening tells readers attuned to classical allusion that the poem is depicting a pleasure garden, a *locus amoenus* ('delightful place'), evoking the perfection (and literary prestige) of the Golden Age.⁴¹ Educated readers would anticipate a variation on the theme of an unspoiled land that enjoys eternal spring, where unplanted trees hang heavy with fruit, and meadows bloom with unsown flowers, uncultivated fields bring forth crops, and the air is fragrant with perfume.⁴²

In the Old English, the *felix locus* has become *æþelast londa*, 'the noblest of lands.' But what in the Latin was a single hexameter flavoured with pagan resonances has here been expanded into a ten-line traditional vernacular opening:

Hæbbe ic gefrugnen þætte is feor heonan
eastdælum on æþelast londa
firum gefræge. Nis se foldan sceat
ofer middangeard mongum gefere
folcagendra, ac he afyrred
is 5
þurh Meotudes meaht manfremmendum.
Wlitig is se wong eall, wynnum geblissad
mid þam fægrestum foldan stencum;
ænlic is þæt iglond, æþele se Wyrhta
modig meahtum spedig, se þa moldan
gesette. 10

[I have heard that in eastern regions far from here there is the noblest of lands known to men. That corner of the earth is not accessible to many rulers across the world, but is

removed from sinners through the might of the Creator. The plain is entirely beautiful, rejoicing in delights, in the fairest perfumes of the earth. That island is unique, the Maker noble, magnanimous and powerful in might, who founded that land.]

The Old English translator roots his opening in tradition by hailing his audience with the conventional claim of the oral poet: 'I have heard tell' (*hæbbe ic gefrugen*).⁴³ He then stamps out his vernacular credentials with an envelope pattern that asserts the poem's origins in hearsay (*gefrugen ... gefræge*, lines 1a and 3a), and which is perhaps inspired by the repetition in the Latin *locus ... locus* (lines 1 and 9).⁴⁴ This pattern is woven into the passage through alliterative ornament:⁴⁵ *gefrugen ... feor / ... firum gefræge ... foldan / ... gefere / folcagendra ... afyrred / ... manfremendum / ... fægrestum foldan*; and the lines are also bound by another alliterative pattern: *middangeard mongum / ... Meotudes meaht manfremendum / ... modig meahtum ... moldan*. Patterns of alliteration and repetition are even arranged chiastically, enveloping the whole passage:

eastdælum on æþelast londa
firum gefræge. Nis se foldan sceat (lines 2–3)

mid þam fægrestum foldan stencum,
ænlic is þæt iglond, æpele se Wyrhta (lines 8–9)

These openings also exemplify the poets' different approaches to allegory. Lactantius's hexameter is highly allusive: his reference to a happy land 'remote in the distant east' (*in primo ... oriente remotus*) could of course be taken to suggest the earthly Garden of Eden, which was thought to be found at the eastern fringes of the world. (Indeed, other Christian Latin poets explicitly related the *locus amoenus* to the biblical description of Eden as a 'garden of delight,' *paradisus uoluptatis*.)⁴⁶ But Lactantius never forces the Christian connection, preferring to indulge his readership's cultured tastes with rarified classical allusion.⁴⁷

The Old English poet, on the other hand, uses rhetorical devices with great dexterity to draw out the Christian meaning more plainly. There are already some references to God – although the

names ‘Creator’ (*Meotud*) and ‘Maker’ (*Wyrhta*) are not necessarily Christian. (Indeed, Christ is mentioned for the first time only in the exegesis in the poem’s latter half, at line 388b.) There seems to be an allusion to Eden, as the Old English word for paradise, *neorxna-wong*, is evoked through reference to its two elements: *wong* (‘plain’) actually appears in line 7, and the impression of a wide open space, shaded with ‘greenness’ – implied by the preceding element *neorxna* – is conjured up by words such as *foldan sceat*, *folde*, *molde*, *lond*, and *iglond*.⁴⁸

Moreover, as we discover later on, the poet refers to the Christian meaning retrospectively, by drawing verbal echoes between the opening lines and the explicit exegesis at the end. There, the earthly grove is revealed to be paradise, and the phoenix’s flight as Adam and Eve’s Fall: *ond hi þa gesette on þone selestan / foldan sceates, þone fira bearn / nemnað neorxnawong* (‘and then he established them in the finest corner of the earth, which the sons of men call paradise,’ lines 395–397a; echoes of lines 3b and 10b are underlined). These echoes, the aural connections between the poem’s opening and the closing vision of heaven, exemplify the syncretism between paradise and heaven that is often found in Old English literature.⁴⁹ In the opening lines, the grove (paradise) is said to be inaccessible to *manfremmdum* (‘evil-doers’), a phrase echoed in the final description of heaven as a place occupied by *ryhtfremmede manes amerede* (‘the good-doers, purged of sin,’ lines 632–3). So even if the opening of *The Phoenix* is not yet confessedly Christian, a delicate network of echoes and allusions draws out Lactantius’s subtle allegory more strongly.

As well as elucidating the allegory, devices also help the Old English poet to assimilate the classical source into his native idiom, as the next few lines show. In the *De aue phoenice*, Lactantius elaborates the *locus amoenus* topos, starting with a bold allusion to Ennius that appears ‘comme une élégance et un défi,’ as Jacques Fontaine put it.⁵⁰ The following description, underpinned by anaphora and antithesis, is strongly resonant of the classical descriptions of the Golden Age, a prehistoric epoch characterised by the catalogue of ills that are *not* present:⁵¹

Qua patet aeterni maxima porta poli
Nec tamen aestiuos hiemisue propinquus ad ortus
Sed qua sol uerno fundit ab axe diem.

Illic planities tractus diffundit apertos,
Nec tumulus crescit **nec** caua uallis hiat
Sed nostros montes, quorum iuga celsa putantur,
 Per bis sex ulnas imminet ille
 locus. (lines 2–8)

[... where the great door of the everlasting heavens lies open. Far from the summer or winter sunrises, it is close to where the sun pours out the day from skies of spring. A plain spreads its open fields there: no mound swells up, no hollow valley yawns. But it surpasses our mountains – whose peaks men think lofty – by twice six fathoms.]

These negative statements, yoked by anaphora and ending in antithesis, articulate the inexpressibility topos (*Unsagbarkeitstopos*),⁵² which has long been the conventional portrayal of places of perfection.⁵³ In classical descriptions of the Elysian fields, for example, such ‘negative’ anaphora and antithesis is typically tied to the *locus amoenus* topos, enumerating absent pains in order to suggest unimaginable bliss; and the Christian Latin poets easily appropriated the anaphora, antithesis, and catalogue of absent ills in their lavish descriptions of the Garden of Eden or the kingdom of heaven.⁵⁴ In *The Phoenix*, the borrowing of classical patterns is immediately evident, and it has even affected the syntax, generating two long ‘Latinate’ sentences (lines 14b–20a and 21b–7). But Latin influence is offset by vernacular brilliance:

Ðær bið oft open, eadgum togeanes
 onhliden hleopra wyn, heofonrices duru.
 Þæt is wynsum wong, wealdas grene
 rume under roderum. **Ne** mæg þær ren **ne** snaw,
ne forstes fnæst **ne** fyres
 blæst, 15
ne hægles hryre **ne** hrimes dryre
ne sunnan hætu, **ne** sincaldu
ne wearm weder **ne** winterscur
 wihte gewyrdan, **ac** se wong seomað
 eadig ond onsund. Is þæt æþele
 lond 20
 blostmum geblowen. Beorgas þær **ne** muntas

steape **ne** stondað, **ne** stanclifu
 heah hlifiað, swa her mid us,
ne dene **ne** dalu **ne** dunscafu,
 hlæwas **ne** hlincas, **ne** þær hleonað
 oo 25
 unsmeþes wiht, **ac** se æþela feld
 wridað under wolcnum wynnum geblowen.

[There the door of the heavenly kingdom is often open, and the joy of songs is revealed to the blessed. That plain is delightful, the woods green, spacious under the skies. There may neither rain, nor snow, nor breath of frost, nor blast of fire, nor pouring of hail, nor falling of hoarfrost, nor the heat of the sun, nor endless cold, nor warm weather, nor winter shower spoil anything, but the meadow remains blessed and whole. That noble land is flowering with blossoms. There stand no hills, nor steep mountains, nor do stony cliffs rise up high, as they do here with us, nor glen, nor dale, nor hill-caves, nor mounds, nor ridges. Nor does any rough thing ever lean there, but the noble field thrives under the clouds, blossoming with delights.]

In a feat of virtuosity, the passage conveys the ‘inexpressible.’ To compensate for the lack of concrete description, aural effects take over, whetting our curiosity and excitement. The anaphora (repeated *ne* at the beginning of half-lines) marks a regular rhythmical beat, especially at lines 15–16, and this drumming rhythm contributes to the sense of the relentless (absent) elements. The single instance of near-rhyme in the Latin *crescit ... hiat* (line 6) has been developed into a rapid run of rhymes that are mostly highlighted by two-stress rhythm and double alliteration: *fnæst ... blæst*, / *hryre ... dryre* / *hætu ... sincaldu* / *weder ... winterscur*; *onsund ... lond*; *dalu ... dunscafu*. The absence of any detailed description is contained by envelope patterns, and their soothingly vague promises of a flowering field: *wynsum wong* (13a) and *se wong* (19b); *is þæt æþele lond* / *blostmum geblowen* (20b–21a) and *ac se æþela feld* / *... wynnum geblowen* (26b–7a). Visual description fails; instead, aural patterns transport the audience in a rush of rhetorical effects. Taken together, aural patterns achieve a formal beauty, and even come to stand for the perfection of paradise.

A few lines later on in the *De aue phoenice*, we are greeted by another anaphoric outburst. In lines echoing Vergil, Statius, and Cicero, the *nec ... sed* antithesis is stretched over another long catalogue of absent woes by the anaphora of eleven negatives:⁵⁵

Non huc exsanguis morbi **non** aegra
senectus 15

Nec mors crudelis **nec** metus asper adest
Nec scelus infandum **nec** opum uesana cupido

Cernitur aut ardens caedis amore furor
Luctus acerbus abest et egestas obsita pannis

Et curae insomnes et uiolenta
fames 20

Non ibi tempestas **nec** uis furit horrida uenti

Nec gelido terram rore pruina tegit
Nulla super campos tendit sua uellera nubes

Nec cadit ex alto turbidus umor aquae
Sed fons in medio est quem uiuum nomine
dicunt. 25

[Wan diseases do not come here, nor feeble old age, nor cruel death, nor desperate fear, nor unspeakable crime, nor the mad desire for wealth, nor frenzy burning with love of slaughter. Bitter grief, want covered with rags, sleepless cares and violent hunger – all are absent. The tempest and the wind's fearful force do not rage, and the hoarfrost does not cover the ground with its icy dew; no cloud spreads its fleeces over the fields, nor does the dark drenching of rain fall from the sky. A fountain is situated in the middle, which they call 'the living fountain.']

Again, the *Phoenix*-poet lengthens the catalogue and intensifies the aural effect. The anaphora is expanded and tightened:

Nis þær on þam
londe laðgeniðla 50
ne wop **ne** wracu, weatacen **nan**
ylðu **ne** yrmðu **ne** se enga deað
ne lifes lyre **ne** laþes cyme
ne synn **ne** sacu **ne** sarwacu

ne wædle gewin ne welan

onsyn

55

ne sorg ne slæp ne swar leger;

ne wintergeweorp ne wedra gebregd

hreoþ under heofonum ne se hearda forst

caldum cylegicelum cnyseð ænigne;

þær ne hægl ne hrim hreosað to

foldan

60

ne windig wolcen, ne þær wæter fealleþ

lyfte gebysgad, ac þær lagustreamas,

wundrum wrætlice wyllan onspringað

fægum foldwylmum.

[In that land there is no persecutor, neither weeping nor vengeance, no sign of woe, neither old age, nor misery, nor cruel death, nor loss of life, nor the coming of evil, nor sin nor strife, nor painful tribulation, nor the hardship of poverty, nor the want of wealth, nor sorrow nor sleep nor weak illness, nor winter storm, nor change of weather, tempestuous under the skies; neither does severe frost with its freezing icicles oppress anyone; there, neither hail nor hoarfrost falls to the ground, nor are the heavens windy, nor does rain drip there, weighed down in the air, but there rivers spring up marvellously and wonderfully from a fountain, with beautiful streams.]

Like the previous description, the passage is organized by repeated *ne* and *þær*, and this clenched anaphora generates a brisk rhythm, as does the use of alliterating two-stress doublets: *ne wop ne wracu*, *ylðu ne yrmðu*, *ne synn ne sacu*, *ne sorg ne slæp*, *ne hægl ne hrim*. The single Latin leonine rhyme *insomnes ... fames* (line 20) has been developed here into a string of near- and full rhymes: *lyre ... cyme / sacu ... sarwacu / gewin ... onsyn*, as well as interlinear rhymes: *wracu ... / ylðu ne yrmðu*; *synn / gewin ... onsyn*. Lactantius's reference to a fountain (*fons*, line 25) is expanded, as the pains of our world finally resolve in a vision of the watered plain of paradise, depicted by 'liquid' assonance: *foldan ... / fealleþ / wyllan / foldwylmum* (lines 60–4). This sequence demonstrates through a kind of tmesis that this 'land' (*fold-*) encloses 'springs' (*-wylmum*).⁵⁶ This welter of aural patterns would surely fill an

audience with wonder at a world beyond imagination.

The *Phoenix*-poet uses other strategies to adapt the classical source to more local concerns. For example, he elaborates on that most English of preoccupations, the weather.⁵⁷ The description of the (absent) bad weather in fact recalls other descriptions of ‘winter-bitter weather’ (*winterbiter weder*) in Old English poetry.⁵⁸ Likewise, Lactantius’s earlier reference to (the lack of) mounds and valleys (line 6) has been assimilated to a local topography, the hills, mountains and stony cliffs *swa her mid us* (lines 21b–25a). The *Phoenix*-poet emphasizes the exclusion of high peaks by using seven different terms for such elevations.⁵⁹ He thus highlights the contrast between the rugged landscape familiar to us, a ‘fallen’ landscape as it were, and the smooth flat plain of paradise. And as with the weather, the wild landscape has strong literary connotations. In vernacular verse, mountains often stand as a metaphor for the harshness of this life. In *Beowulf*, for example, such imagery is developed to the extreme, as steep slopes and cliffs represent a hostile landscape of the hellish imagination. The monsters are associated with repulsive excrescences: they live near ‘steep stony cliffs’ (*steap stanhlido*, line 1409a) and ‘precipitous headlands’ (*neowle næssas*, line 1411a), they inhabit ‘wolf-infested hillsides, wind-swept crags’ (*wulfhleofu, windige næssas*, line 1358), and cliff-edges hang around their lair. It has been shown that the description of the monster mere resembles the description of hell in Blickling Homily XVI (ultimately derived from the apocryphal *Visio S. Pauli*);⁶⁰ and the strange picture of an inland pool surrounded by fenland and forest, headlands, and sea-cliffs suggests that landscape has become figurative, in Eric Stanley’s words, ‘a gallimaufry of devices’ that conveys more chillingly than literal statement the surreal horror of hell.⁶¹ So by expanding Lactantius’s account of a rough landscape, and by echoing other ‘figurative’ landscapes in Old English poetry, the *Phoenix*-poet is able to suggest that this land is the very antithesis to hell.

In these descriptions, then, the *Phoenix*-poet continues to blur the borderline between paradise and heaven. Even the antithesis (*ne ... ac*) and anaphora (repeated *ne* and repeated *þær*) point figuratively to a vision of heaven, for as Hildegard Tristram has shown, such patterns are characteristic of descriptions of heaven in Old English verse.⁶² There are also verbal echoes that tie these

opening passages to the poem's closing vision of heaven, as the reference to the blessed (*eadgum*, line 11) foreshadows the blessed in heaven (*eadgum*, line 500), and the music pouring from the skies (*hleopra wyn*, line 12) catches the strains of the heavenly hosts (*þonne hleopriað halge gæstas*, line 539). The poet's handling of devices thus draws out ever more strongly the layers of allegorical meaning suggested in *De aue phoenixe*. But in deference to the source, the allegory still remains oblique, at least at the first reading. It is only upon a close second reading that we apprehend that the phoenix's grove refers to the Garden of Eden, and is nothing less than a vision of heaven.

It seems, then, that the *Phoenix*-poet has carried off a challenging task with remarkable ease: he has turned Latin verse, ripe with classical allusion and refined rhetorical devices, into the traditional fabric of vernacular verse. How could he adapt these Latin figures so confidently? The most convincing explanation is his learnedness. Not only was this poet steeped in traditional vernacular lore, but he also had much more than a passing acquaintance with Christian Latin literature, a deep familiarity with Lactantius, Ambrose, and other Christian Latin poets of Late Antiquity. Material and stylistic ideas gleaned from his wider reading would surely have aided and informed his adaptation. For example, the *Phoenix*-poet may well have known the following ecphrasis from the *Laudes Dei* by Dracontius, an African Christian Latin poet of the later fifth century.⁶³ (Dracontius's description of paradise was itself inspired by Vergil's *Aeneid* VI, lines 638–9.)⁶⁴

Est locus interea diffundens quattuor
 amnes 180
 Floribus ambrosiis gemmato caespite pictus,
 Plenus odoriferis nunquam marcentibus herbis,
 Hortus in orbe Dei cunctis felicior hortis.
 Fructus inest anni, cum tempora nesciat anni.
 Illic floret humus semper sub uere
 perenni, 185
 Arboreus hinc inde chorus uestitur amoene:
 Frondibus intextis ramorum murus opacus
 Stringitur atque omnes pendent ex arbore fructus
 Et passim per prata iacent. **Non** solis anheli

Flammatur radiis, quatitur **nec** flatibus
 ullis 190
Nec coniuratis furit illic turbo procellis;
Non glacies dstricta domat, **non** grandinis ictus
 Verberat aut gelidis canescunt prata pruinis.
 Sunt ibi **sed** placidi flatus, quos mollior aura
 Edidit exurgens nitidis de fontibus
 horti; 195

[There is a place, meanwhile, pouring forth four rivers,
 embroidered with ambrosial flowers on jewelled turf, filled
 with fragrant plants that never droop, a garden more happy
 than all the gardens in God's world. The fruit of the year is
 there, since it knows not the seasons of the year. There the
 earth always blossoms in the time of eternal spring. The
 multitude of trees is clothed delightfully, on each side. A
 shaded wall of branches with entwined leaves is drawn close
 together, and all fruits hang from the trees, and lie scattered
 in the meadows. That place is not burnt in the rays of the
 parching sun; it is not shaken by any blasts, nor does a
 whirlwind rouse its tempests together there; no rigid ice can
 quell, no bullet of hailstorm lashes, nor under stiff hoarfrost
 do the fields grow white. But there are calm breezes that a
 gentler gust brings forth, arising by that garden's gleaming
 springs.]

In many ways, the Old English description of the phoenix's grove
 recalls this *felix hortus*. Both gardens are highly ornamental,
 decked with herbs, flowers, and fruit. Both descriptions employ the
 inexpressibility topos: these lands are sheltered from the heat of
 the sun, they suffer no windy blasts, neither hoarfrosts nor hail,
 but they are pleasant and temperate and watered by streams. As in
The Phoenix, this antithesis is strung together by anaphora (*non ...
 nec ... nec ... non ... non ... sed*, lines 189-94). Just as in the *The
 Phoenix*, the description is highlighted by flashes of leonine rhyme
 and homoeoteleuton: *odoriferis ... herbis / hortis / anni ... anni /
 perenni / inde ... amoene* (lines 182-6); *radiis ... ullis / procellis / ...
 / gelidis ... pruinis* (lines 190-3). Of course, the gentle, almost
 soporific rhymes and anaphora in these lines are quite different
 from *The Phoenix's* pounding effects. But the similarity of style and

theme is nonetheless remarkable.

Another passage which may have inspired *The Phoenix* is the depiction of paradise in the *Carmen de spiritalis historiae gestis*, the influential paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus by the Gallo-Roman poet Avitus, bishop of Vienne at the turn of the sixth century (c. 491–c. 518).⁶⁵ Avitus's hexameters also tell of eternal spring, of a perpetually green land free from frost and rain, and shaded from scorching heat. It is noteworthy that this vision is followed immediately by a description of the phoenix:⁶⁶

Non hic alterni succedit temporis umquam
Bruma nec aestiui redeunt post frigora soles,
Sic celsus calidum cum reddit circulus
annum, 220
Vel densente gelu canescunt arua pruinis.
Hic uer adsidium caeli clementia seruat;
Turbidus auster abest semperque sub aere sudo
Nubila diffugiunt iugi cessura sereno.
Nec poscit natura loci quos non habet
imbres, 225
Sed contenta suo dotantur germina rore.
Perpetuo uiret omne solum terraeque tepentis
Blanda nitet facies, stant semper collibus herbae
Arboribusque comae: quae cum se flore frequenti
Diffundunt, celeri confortant germina
suco. 230
Nam quidquid nobis toto nunc nascitur anno,
Menstrua maturo dant illic tempora fructu.
Lilia perlucet nullo flaccientia sole
Nec tactus uiolat uiolas roseumque ruborem
Seruans perpetuo suffundit gratia
uultu. 235
Sic cum desit hiems nec torrida ferueat aestas,
Fructibus autumnus, uer floribus occupat annum.
Hic, quae donari mentitur fama Sabaeis,
Cinnama nascuntur, uiuax quae colligit ales,
Natali cum fine perit nidoque
perusta 240
Succedens sibimet quaesita morte resurgit:
Nec contenta suo tantum semel ordine nasci,

Longa ueternosi renouatur corporis aetas
Incensamquae leuant exordia crebra senectam.

[Here, winter never follows the change of seasons, nor do the summer suns return after the cold spells, as when the sun's lofty orbit brings back the warm year, nor do the fields grow white with hoarfrost and thickening ice. Here the mildness of the sky preserves perpetual spring. The blustering south wind is absent, and under the clear sky the clouds always disperse yielding to a perennial calm. It is not the nature of the place to need showers, which it does not have, but the contented plants are endowed with their own dew. All the ground is perpetually green, and the gentle face of the warm earth shines. Grasses always remain on the hills, and leaves on the trees, which when they spread themselves with abundant blossom strengthen their shoots with quickening sap. For whatever is now produced for us in a whole year, there, a month's time brings to full fruition. The lilies shine forth, never withering in the sun, nor does its touch ever violate the violets, while the grace of its eternal face pours out, preserving the roses' blush. Thus when there is no winter, and the torrid summer does not burn, autumn fills the year with its fruits, and spring with its flowers. Here cinnamon grows, which tradition falsely assigns to the Sabaeans, which the long-living bird gathers, when it dies in its natal death, and burnt up in its nest, succeeding to itself, rises again from desired death. And not content to be born in its turn only once, its lethargic body's long life is renewed, and repeated beginnings relieve its kindled old age.]

Here paradise is envisaged as the phoenix's grove, and like the Old English passage, the land is blessed perpetually by vernal greenness and autumnal fruitfulness. As in *The Phoenix*, this description is ornamented by leonine rhyme (*calidum ... annum*, line 220). Of course, there are some obvious differences in tone and style. For instance, this serene vision is touched only lightly by the inexpressibility topos. No harsh negative statements ruffle the calm, instead, the wind 'is absent' (*abest*, line 223), and clouds 'drift away' (*diffugiunt*, line 224). However, the similarity of the passages demonstrates a shared literary context from which the

vernacular poet could draw to amplify his allegory of the phoenix's grove.

Another stream of influence which helped the *Phoenix*-poet in his task of adaptation can be found closer to home: the long-established tradition of Latin-inspired vernacular homilies. The portrayal of paradise in *The Phoenix* bears a strong resemblance to the colourful descriptions of heaven (or hell) in sermons, and the heightened aural patterns recall aspects of homiletic style. In Latin homilies, especially in those of Bede and Gregory the Great, different kinds of anaphora often cluster tightly around the inexpressibility topos. For example, in the following extract from a sermon by Gregory, antithesis and compact anaphora (repeated *non* and repeated *quae*) tell us this is a vision of heaven.⁶⁷ The patterns both highlight the passage and hold the audience's attention:

Non falsas diuitias, **non** terrena dona, **non** fugituios honores a Domino, **sed** lucem quaeramus; **nec** lucem **quae** loco clauditur, **quae** tempore finitur, **quae** noctium interruptione uariatur, **quae** a nobis communiter cum pecoribus cernitur, **sed** lucem quaeramus quam uidere cum solis angelis possimus, quam **nec** initium inchoat, **nec** finis angustat.

[Let us seek neither false riches, nor earthly goods, nor the fleeting honours from the Lord, but the light; not the light which is confined in a place, which comes to an end with time, which is changed with the interruption of nights, which is beheld by us and by dumb animals alike, but let us seek the light which we can see with the angels alone, which neither a beginning starts, nor an end shortens.]

Such patterns of anaphora and antithesis are also found in visions of heaven in vernacular homilies, especially in the anonymous Vercelli and Blickling homilies, the homilies for Rogationtide, and in Ælfric's sermons.⁶⁸ For example, the following passage from Blickling Homily V harnesses three different anaphoric sequences to describe the *unasecgenlice* ('indescribable'):⁶⁹

Þær is þæt ece leoht **buton** þeostrum. **Þær** is geogop **buton** ylde, **þær** is þæt æpele lif **buton** geendunge, **þær** is gefea

buton unrottesse, **ne** biþ **þær** hungor, **ne** þurst, **ne** wind, **ne** gewenn, **ne** wætres sweg, **ne** þær **ne** bið leofra gedal, **ne** lapra gesamnung; **ac** **þær** biþ seo ece ræste, and haligra symbelnes **þær** þurhwunaþ; **þær** is þæt unasecggenlice rice þe God syleþ eallum ðæm þe hine lufian willaþ.

[There is that eternal light without darkness. There is youth without age, there is that noble life without end, there is joy without sadness, there is neither hunger there, nor thirst, nor wind, nor conflict, nor the sound of water, nor is there separation of loved ones, nor gathering of enemies; but there is eternal rest, and the feasting of the holy ones continues there; there is that indescribable kingdom that God grants to all those who desire to love him.]

From the directive force of the very first word, *þær*, the audience's attention is immediately engaged. The whole passage, with its ecstatic rhythmic rush, is aimed to enthrall the audience into an awareness of things beyond understanding, the 'inexpressible.' In its technique, and particularly in its use of aural effects – tight anaphora, regular rhythm, alliteration and brief *cola* – this passage is similar to the vision of heaven in *The Phoenix*.

Another method that could have eased the adaptation of the Latin vision of paradise into *The Phoenix* is allusion to Old English verse intertexts. The descriptions of heaven or hell in *Christ III*, *Guthlac B*, and *Judgment Day II* also employ the richly associative figures of anaphora and antithesis (which are probably ultimately derived from homilies).⁷⁰ As the dating of Old English verse is fraught with problems, we cannot be sure of the relative chronology of composition, and thus the direction of influence in any particular case. But unless *The Phoenix* was written earlier than *all* these poems, the poet could have been helped in his adaptation by drawing on such passages, thus lending his rendering an air of vernacular 'authenticity.' Take, for instance, the following passage from the beginning of Cynewulf's *Guthlac B*, where exactly the same patterns are enlisted to give intensity to the presentation of paradise:⁷¹

Fæder wæs acenned
Adam ærest þurh est Godes

on neorxnawong, þær him **nænges** wæs
willan onsyn, **ne** welan brosnung,
ne lifes lyre **ne** lices hryre,
ne dreames dryre **ne** deaðes cyme, 830
ac he on þam lande lifgan moste
ealra leahtra leas, longe neotan
niwra gefeana.

[Adam the father was first brought forth into paradise through the grace of God. For him, there was no want of anything delightful there, neither corruption of wealth, nor loss of life, nor decay of the body, nor subsiding of joy, nor the coming of death, but he was able to live in that land free from all injury, long able to enjoy the new pleasures.]

As in *The Phoenix*, the antithesis in this passage has become entirely formulaic. Both poets also break almost formulaically into a rash of rhyming, and some rhymes are even shared: *hryre ... dryre; lyre ... cyme* in *The Phoenix* sounds like *lyre ... hyre / dryre ... cyme* in this passage. (A similar rhyming pair, *lyre ... gryre*, is also found in *Judgment Day II*, line 266). More generally in Old English verse, it seems that rhymes are associated with visions of paradise, heaven, or hell.⁷² By adopting such formulaic habits, the *Phoenix*-poet thus brings his adaptation of the *De aue phoenice* into the mainstream of tradition.

What is more, the *Phoenix*-poet also manages to create an air of tradition *within* his own poem, through fashioning his own ‘intra-texts.’ The anaphora and antithesis proliferate in *The Phoenix* far beyond their use in the Latin source, and thus become increasingly familiar to the audience. As they reappear in different poetic episodes, these devices draw different parts of the poem together in self-validating allusion. For example, echoes of the inexpressibility topos can be heard in the later account of the phoenix’s peerless song, where rhyme, along with anaphora and two-stress rhythm conveys a sense of rapture. The negative repetitions develop the anaphora in the corresponding passage in *De aue phoenice*, but the soundplay and rhymes (*hlyn ... stefn / eorþan ... organan / geswin*) are the poet’s own inspiration, and recall the earlier description of the phoenix’s grove:

Biþ þæs hleoðres sweg
 eallum songcræftum swetra ond wlitigra
 ond wynsumra wrenca gehwylcum.
Ne magon þam breahmtme byman **ne** hornas,
ne hearpan hlyn, **ne** hæleþa stefn
 ænges on eorþan, **ne** organan
 sweghleopres geswin, **ne** swanes feðre,
ne ænig þara dreama þe Dryhten gescop
 gumum to gliwe in þas geomran woruld. (lines 131b–139)

[The sound of that song is sweeter and more lovely than all melodies, and more winning than any modulation. Neither may trumpets, nor horns, nor the harp's cascade, nor the voice of any man on earth, nor the strain of the organ's harmony, nor the wings of a swan, nor any of the joys which the Lord created for the mirth of men in this mournful world match that music.]

The anaphora and its associated soundplay have been woven so intricately into the poem's fabric that they even appear in the second half of *The Phoenix*, which is not based on Lactantius.⁷³

Ne bið him on þam wicum wiht to sorge,
 wroht **ne** weþel **ne** gewindagas,
 hungor se hata **ne** se hearde þurst,
 yrmþu **ne** yldo. (lines 611–614a)

[In those dwellings there shall be no kind of sorrow for them, neither misery, nor poverty, nor days of toil, neither raging hunger, nor severe thirst, neither woe nor old age.]

This passage clearly alludes to the descriptions of heaven in Revelation 7.16 and 21.4 (where there will be no hunger, thirst, nor old age).⁷⁴ But as J.E. Cross observed, there is also a thematic connection between these lines and an earlier passage describing the phoenix's grove.⁷⁵ A set of deliberate echoes suggests that there is more than simply a thematic similarity at stake here. Verbal repetition implies that the phoenix's grove (or paradise)

should be equated with heaven: the phrase *wiht to sorge* (611b) recalls *ne sorg ne slæp* (56a), and *gewindagas* (612b) echoes *ne wædle gewin* (55a); *ne se hearde þurst* (613b) is reminiscent of *ne se hearda forst* (58b). Most notably, *yrmbu ne ylde* (614a) is a clear echo of *ylde ne yrmbu* (52a).

Such links show how the same material is recast deliberately, in order to make the adaptation feel retrospectively familiar. But adapted patterns are also vital tools for interpretation, for they point out the connections between the poem's literal sense and its spiritual meaning, in this case, between the phoenix's grove and heaven.

In the *De aue phoenix*, the long description of the phoenix's grove, which is marked by anaphora and antithesis, is a prelude to the central part of the poem: the death and rebirth of the phoenix in the flames. At this focal point, Lactantius employs another characteristically Latinate rhetorical device, the simile, to ornament the allegory. As similes are rare in Old English verse, the adaptation of this Latinate device must have been a demanding task for the *Phoenix*-poet. In what follows, we shall see how he adapts the simile, and uses it to great effect to enhance the poem's spiritual significance.

The paucity of similes in Old English poetry was once held as proof that vernacular verse was inferior in style to classical literature, which is prized for its lengthy 'homeric' similes.⁷⁶ There are only five similes in *Beowulf*, for example – hardly a large number in an epic of over three thousand lines. Only one of these, the likening of Beowulf's dissolving sword to melting ice (lines 1605b–1611), is of substantial length and intricacy – and even this seems to have classical associations.⁷⁷ When Old English poets do use similes, they are mostly brief comparisons, like those slight similes in *The Phoenix* where we are told that good deeds shine 'like the sun' (*sunnan gelice*, line 601b), and that after death, souls travel 'most like a bird' (*fugle gelicast*, line 585b).⁷⁸ Rarely do similes in Old English verse develop the imaginative scope of the analogy.

One reason for this scarcity may be that the explicit comparison of the simile can sound contrived, and that Old English poetry naturally tends towards the more spontaneous device of metaphor.

But artifice – in particular the mechanism of comparison – is central to the allegory of *The Phoenix*, and so the numerous similes in the poem become the focus for its spiritual message. In fact, the most explicit justification for the allegory in *The Phoenix* comes in the form of a brief simile (an echo of Christian Latin writers):⁷⁹ Job foretells his resurrection ‘like the phoenix’ (*swa se fugel fenix*, line 558a).⁸⁰

Similes also help to visualize the central mystery of the phoenix’s ‘resurrection.’ In the *De aue phoenice*, a sequence of short similes mark the stages of the phoenix’s rebirth: the ashes are gathered ‘as if in a heap’ (*uelut in massam*, line 99), the new-born phoenix ‘has the likeness of a seed’ (*seminis instar habet*, line 100), it is then likened to a worm, and finally, it takes on the shape of a smooth egg. In the Old English, some changes are made, in order to draw out the Christian meaning more explicitly. The emerging phoenix is likened first to an apple, then to a worm hatching from an egg, and lastly to an eagle. For an educated Anglo-Saxon audience, these similes would all have obvious patristic and poetic connotations. The apple may allude to the image of Christ the apple tree;⁸¹ it suggests the Fall, as it recalls the fruit of knowledge (*æppel*, *The Phoenix*, line 403a) and the Cynewulfian portrayal of doomed wealth as ‘appled gold’ (*æpplede gold*, *The Phoenix*, line 507; *Juliana*, line 688a; *Elene*, line 1259a).⁸² The worm is a symbol of the resurrection in patristic authors such as Clement of Rome and Isidore, and Ambrose even links the worm and phoenix as symbols of the resurrection.⁸³ Likewise, the eagle has been associated with the phoenix at least since Herodotus;⁸⁴ it is an exemplum for the resurrection in Arator and Isidore, as well as in the poetry of Cynewulf.⁸⁵ From these few examples, we can already discern the *Phoenix*-poet’s skill at adapting the similes: he makes them more overtly Christian, and at the same time, he lets them echo vernacular verse.

The most striking example of the *Phoenix*-poet’s skill at adaptation is his seed-grain simile. In the *De aue phoenice*, the sequence of similes describing the creature’s rebirth is followed by a short passage that likens the newly born phoenix to a silkworm that turns into a butterfly. This image is an oblique reference to the resurrection, but it is veiled through allusion to the *Metamorphoses* (where Ovid describes how silkworms – *agrestes*

born).⁸⁶

Et Phoenix ruptis pullulat exuuiis,

Ac uelut agrestes, cum filo ad saxa tenentur,

Mutari tineae papilione

solent

(lines 106–8)

[And bursting her shell, the phoenix hatches, just as

silkworms, when they are fastened by a thread to stones,

usually change into a butterfly]

How can this highly literary simile, so imbued with classical

allusion, be turned into the traditional fabric of vernacular verse?

As with the anaphora, the *Phoenix*-poet adapts the device by

developing it. Lactantius's oblique image is turned into a delightful vernacular vignette, which counts as the longest and most

arresting simile in the whole Old English poetic corpus. In

midst of the poem's action comes a moment of reflection on the

nature of the analogy between rebirth and resurrection. Instead of

using the silk-worm analogy, however, the vernacular poet draws

on Lactantius's earlier comment that the growing phoenix 'has the

likeness of a seed' (*seminis instar habet*, line 100), and develops it

into a simile spectacular in setting and scenery:

Þonne bræd

weorþeð

240

eal edniwe eft acenned.

synnum asundrad. Sumes onlice

swa mon to ondleofne eorðan wæstmas

on hærfeste, ham gelædeð

wiste wynsume ær wintres

cyme

245

on rypes timan, þy læs hi renes scur

awyrde under wolcnum; þær hi wraðe metað,

fodorþege gefeon þonne forst ond snaw

mid ofermægne eorþan þeccað

wintergewædum; of þam wæstmum

sceal

250

eorla eadwelan eft alædan

þurh cornes gecynd, þe ær clæne bið
 sæd onsawen, þonne sunnan glæm
 on lenctenne lifes tacen
 weceð woruldgestreon þæt þa wæstmas
 beoð, 255
 þurh agne gecynd eft acende
 foldan frætwe; swa se fugel weorþeð,
 gomel æfter gearum geong edniwe
 flæsce bifongen.

[Then the flesh is born again completely anew, sundered from sins, rather like the way someone brings home at the harvest the fruits of the earth as food, delicious nourishment, at reaping-time before the coming of winter, lest a shower of rain destroy them under the skies. There people find sustenance, delight in food, when frost and snow clothe the earth with overwhelming might in their winter-garments. From these fruits shall the blessedness of men be brought forth again, through the nature of a grain, which is first sown as a pure seed, when the gleam of the sun, the token of life, rouses the riches of the world at spring, so that these fruits, the adornments of the earth, are born again through their own nature. So the bird, ancient with the years, is made young anew, encased by flesh.]

There is no better example of the *Phoenix*-poet's bold approach to adaptation. He has turned Lactantius's oblique image into the cardinal moment in the Christian allegory. Rather than alluding to Ovid's silk-worms, he echoes the Christian account of rebirth as depicted in the parable of the Sower, evoking the harvest of souls at Doomsday, when the blessed will be gathered into God's granaries.⁸⁷ He makes the allegory more transparent by describing the flesh as 'sundered from sins' (*synnum asundrad*, line 242a; a rephrasing of *ruptiis ... exuuiis*), a Christian formula found in Cynewulfian poems. (The same formula also occurs in a long simile in *Elene: asundrod fram synnum*, line 1309a.)⁸⁸

The inspiration for the Christian overtones in this vernacular simile probably came from the poet's wider reading in Christian Latin literature, where the rebirth of the seed is often employed as a natural analogy to the resurrection.⁸⁹ The topos is based

ultimately on a highly rhetorical passage from I Corinthians 15.35–8, where the eventual flourishing of a ‘bare grain’ is taken to represent the resurrection of man at Doomsday:

Sed dicet aliquis, quomodo resurgunt mortui? quali autem corpore ueniunt? insipiens tu, quod seminas non uiuificatur, nisi prius moriatur. Et quod seminas, non corpus quod futurum est seminas, sed nudum granum, ut puta tritici, aut alicuius ceterorum. Deus autem dat illi corpus sicut uoluit, et unicuique seminum proprium corpus.

[But some man will say, how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die first. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, perhaps of wheat, or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.]

In the writings of authors such as Clement of Rome and Tertullian, the seed and the phoenix are treated together as natural parallels to the resurrection.⁹⁰ But the *Phoenix*-poet may also have been influenced by the verse of later Christian Latin poets. Dracontius, for example, lists examples of natural rebirth to prove the veracity of the resurrection:⁹¹

Annua conspiciant agris frumenta
renasci 625
Mortua per sulcos terram findentis aratri.
Maior et ex truncis surgit radicibus arbor
Et foliis uestita uiret redeuntibus annis.
Pampinus uuiferae uitis sarmenta reuestit
Et gemmata rosis redeunt uirgulta
ruboris 630
Ambrosio reduces rumpunt de cortice fructus,
Quis est uita fugax et par cum flore senectus;
Fit rediuiua uirens et crinibus herba renatis;
Ligna renascentur reduci sub germine cuncta:
Quae nunc herba fuit, lignum iacet, herba
futura. 635

[Let them consider the grains in the fields that germinate again annually after dying in the furrows of the plough cleaving the earth. A tree rises taller from cut roots, and year after year its vesture turns green with leaves. Once again a tendril clothes the twigs of the grape-bearing vine, and bushes studded with red buds reappear with roses, and returning fruits burst through the sweet rind. Their life is fleeting, for with flowering comes old age. Grass, too, is brought back to life, green with a regrown crop. All trees are born again, renewed from a sprig; what was once a green stalk, now lies as wood, and will again be a stalk.]

This catalogue of regeneration continues with the snake's shedding of its skin, the deer's regrowth of antlers, the birds' regrowth of plumage, a blind man's recovery of sight, and an ill man's recovery from disease. It is interesting to note that the next example is the phoenix:

Phoenicis exactam renouat Deus igne iuuentam
Exustusque senex tumulo procedit adultus:
Consumens dat membra rogos sine sorte
sepulcri. 655
Ignibus extinctis iam mortua flamma resurgit,
Redditur ignis edax rediuiuo lumine candens

[God renews the spent youth of the phoenix through fire. As an old creature it is burnt up, then it emerges from its funeral mound in its prime. The pyre that consumes gives limbs without the lot of the tomb. When the fires are extinguished, the flame, now dead, leaps up again; the devouring fire returns, blazing with revived light.]

A closer source that may have inspired the seed-grain image is prose homilies, where similes are often employed. In one of Gregory the Great's homilies, for example, the 'likeness' of the resurrection to the seed's regrowth is cast as an exemplum, posed as a rhetorical question. The passage alludes to the Pauline writings on the resurrection, as well as to Ezekiel's vision of a valley of dry bones, raised into living men:⁹²

Cuncta ergo in semine simul latent, quae tamen non simul ex semine prodeunt. Ex semine quippe producitur radix, ex radice prodit uirgultum, ex uirgulto oritur fructus, in fructu etiam producitur semen. Addamus ergo quia et semen latet in semine. Quid igitur mirum, is ossa, neruos, carnem, capillosque reducat ex puluere, qui lignum, fructus, folia, in magna mole arboris ex paruo quotidie semine restaurat?

[Therefore all these things are hidden at the same time in the seed, which nevertheless do not appear simultaneously from the seed. For from the seed comes the root, from the root comes the shoot, the fruit springs forth from the shoot, and in the fruit is born the seed. Therefore we may add also that the seed is hidden in the seed. What marvel, therefore, if he should bring back bones, sinews, flesh, and hair from dust who daily rebuilds limbs, fruit and foliage from the little seed into the great structure of the tree?]

It is likely that such imagery influenced the *Phoenix*-poet, just as it influenced other learned vernacular authors, including Ælfric and Cynewulf.⁹³ For example, Gregory's homily is the source for parts of a Easter homily by Ælfric (written later than *The Phoenix*).⁹⁴ In one passage in Ælfric's homily, a discussion of the resurrection is followed by the analogy of flowers, fruits, flies, and birds which apparently disappear in winter, and re-emerge in spring (and in fact, the next few lines of the homily even mention the life-cycle of the phoenix, as yet another analogy to the resurrection).⁹⁵ It appears, then, that for learned vernacular authors, the phoenix and spring's natural regrowth were obvious analogies to the resurrection. While the simile in *The Phoenix* is clearly not inspired by Ælfric's later text, the poet and the homilist may be drawing from the same pool of images.

While inspiration for the seed-grain simile comes from learned Latin sources, the *Phoenix*-poet tries to make this foreign-sounding device appear more traditional. His seed-grain imagery is perhaps meant to bring to mind native depictions of the cycle of the seasons.⁹⁶ But most importantly, the simile is layered with a number of vernacular aural patterns, which intensify its rhetorical effect and underscore Christian allegorical themes.

An envelope pattern circles the central theme of resurrection and marks out the simile as a ‘set-piece’: *þonne bræd weorþeð / eal edniwe eft acenned ... eft acende / ... swa se fugel weorþeð / ... geong edniwe / flæsce bifongen*. This pattern describes rebirth, for the phoenix’s encasement in new flesh is suggested by the surrounding of this passage with words denoting ‘flesh’ (*bræd*, *flæsce*). By linking *bræd* (‘flesh’) with *fugel* (‘bird’), this pattern joins the two poles of the simile to the point of the allegory: the relation between the rebirth of the phoenix and mankind’s resurrection. Vernacular patterns such as alliteration also serve to draw attention to the simile.⁹⁷ In the last line, succinct alliteration points to the phoenix’s rebirth by linking *gomel* (‘old’) with *geong* (‘young’).

Vernacular patterns not only delineate and decorate the simile, they also bind it internally. For instance, the paralleling of three b-verses neatly ties together the simile’s beginning, middle, and end: *eft acenned* (line 241b), *eft alædan* (line 251b); *eft acende* (line 256b). The repetition of *eft*, ‘again,’ and *acenned ... alædan ... acende* (‘born’ ... ‘brought forth’ ... ‘born’) emphasizes the continual cycle of rebirth. The rhythm of life, death, and rebirth is also depicted by repetitions in the a-verses. The seed-grain’s promise of regeneration (*þurh cornes gecynd*, ‘through the nature of a grain,’ line 252a) is fulfilled in the corresponding description of fruits, born through their innate capacity for renewal (*þurh agne gecynd*, ‘through their own nature,’ line 256a).

Puns also draw out the Christian message. Since *gecynd* can mean both ‘nature’ and ‘offspring’ the poet is demonstrating that it is the nature of the seed (and the phoenix, and all flesh) to be reborn. The pun is even clarified by paronomasia on *gecynd* (‘nature,’ line 256) and *acende* (‘born,’ line 256) – word-play thus stands as proof of the resurrection. This message of life after death is reinforced by a pattern of cross alliteration that cements the paronomasia on *gecynd* (‘nature’) and *acende* (‘born’):⁹⁸ *þurh a gne ge c ynd e ft acende* (‘are born again through their own nature’).

Another way in which the poet has tried to make the simile ‘go native’ is by covering it with compounds, which link it to vernacular intertexts. There are no fewer than five compounds in the space of eight lines: *fodorþege* (‘food-eating’); *ofermægne* (‘overpowering-might’); *wintergewædum* (‘winter-garments’);

eadwelan, ('blessedness,' 'riches'); *woruldgestreon* ('world-treasures').⁹⁹ The density of compounds connects this simile to other passages in Old English verse, such as *Andreas*, where a similar description of winter (a vernacular 'digression' from the Latin sources) is also cluttered with compounds:¹⁰⁰

Snaw eorðan band	1255
wintergeworpum. Weder coledon	
heardum hægelscurum, swylce hrim ond forst,	
hare hildstapan, hæleða eðel	
lucon, leoda gesetu. Land wæron freorig	
cealdum cylegicelum, clang wæteres þrym	1260
ofer eastreamas, is brycgade	
blæce brimrade.	

[Snow bound the earth with winter-blizzards. The skies grew chill with hard hail-showers; likewise rime and frost, hoary battle-marchers, locked the land of men, the people's dwellings. The earth was freezing with cold and chilly icicles; the glory of water shrank over the river-streams; ice bridged a shining water-road.]

Six compounds layer this description: *wintergeworpum* ('winter-blizzards'); *hægelscurum* ('hail-showers'); *hildstapan* ('battle-marchers'); *cylegicelum* ('chill-icicles'); *eastreamas* ('river-streams'); *brimrade* ('water-road').¹⁰¹ It can hardly be coincidental that two of these rare poetic compounds, *wintergeweorp* and *cylegicel*, appear nowhere else in Old English literature except in *The Phoenix* (albeit in a different passage, in the vision of a storm-free paradise).

Another intertext to the seed-grain simile is the 'epic' simile in *Beowulf*, which is also covered with compounds. Here, the poet tells how the giant sword-blade with which Beowulf beheaded Grendel melts in his blood 'most like ice':

Ða þæt sweord ongan	1605
æfter heaþoswate hildegicelum,	
wigbil wanian; þæt wæs wundra sum,	
þæt hit eal gemealt ise gelicost,	
ðonne forstes bend Fæder onlæteð,	
onwindeð wælrapas, se gewæld hafað	1610

sæla ond mæla; þæt is soð Metod.

[That sword, the war-blade, then began to wane into battle-icicles, because of blood from the fray. It was a miraculous thing, the way it entirely melted, most like ice, when the Father loosens the fetter of frost, unwinds the water-ropes, He who has power over times and seasons. That is the true Creator.]

Like the seed-grain simile, this ‘epic’ simile has biblical and patristic antecedents (and may even be influenced by classical Latin sources).¹⁰² What is more, the seed and sword similes correspond closely in both theme and style. The sword simile fuses images of slaughter and spring, resembling the seed-grain’s suggestions of death and Easter renewal. And like *The Phoenix*’s depiction of seasonal decay and growth, this passage suggests that horror can turn to healing, as the sword melting in the blood of monsters is described in images of spring’s natural redemption. Strikingly, the *Beowulf*-poet also employs an abundance of native-sounding compounds: *heafoswate* (‘war-sweat’), *wigbil* (‘war-blade’), *hildegicelum* (‘battle-icicles’), *wælrapas* (‘water-ropes’).¹⁰³ The *Beowulf* simile likens the dissolving sword to God’s melting of ice, and some compounds actually encapsulate this comparison through the juxtaposition of images, as well as through punning. For example, the first element of *wælrapas*, *wææl*, means ‘pool,’ and so the compound offers a natural explanation for the strangely melting metal blade by linking winter’s binding (-*rapas*) to spring’s wetness (*wæl*-). But *wææl* means ‘slaughter,’ and so another reading of *wælrapas* would be ‘slaughter-ropes,’ thus linking the image of spring to the carnage that has gone before. Likewise, compounds in the *Phoenix* simile are employed for allusive effect, to point out the different perspectives of the allegory. For example, the compound *wintergewædum* (‘winter-garments’) could be referring either to the fetters of frost that bind the earth in winter, or to the phoenix’s ageing flesh, for elsewhere the phoenix is described as burdened by a ‘thousand winters of this life’ (*þusende þisses lifes*, / ...*wintra*, line 151–2) and ‘afflicted by years’ (*wintrum gebysgad*, lines 162b and 420b). Moreover, with *woruldgestreon* (‘world-treasures’), the poet could be referring either to the seed-grain’s fruition, or to the reborn phoenix (who, as we shall see, is

later described as treasure). This dual reference is reinforced by the paralleling of *wintergewædum* with *woruldgestreon*, and the alliteration of both with *wæstm* ('fruit,' or 'flesh,' lines 250b and 255b) which suggests that the burdensome 'winter-garments' of snow (or of flesh) will eventually be shed to reveal fruit (or the phoenix).

The *Phoenix*-poet has made the simile so much his own that he uses this device not only as a decorative set-piece, but as an integral part of the poem's structure. A series of similes introduced by *fela gelices*, *gelicast* or *swa*, link the poem's two parts.¹⁰⁴ The whole poem is thus presented as a simile, as the literal narrative in the first half of the poem is joined to the explicit allegorical interpretations in the latter half. The absorption of the simile into the poem's structure can best be illustrated in the rendering of the passage that describes the reborn phoenix as a transfigured artefact. In the Latin source, the highly visual imagery is intensified by the exotic diction and enamelled style, in particular by a string of comparisons and a simile (introduced by *credas*):

Albicat insignis mixto uiridante zmaragdo	135
Et puro cornu gemmea cuspis hiat.	
Ingentes oculi: credas geminos hyacinthos	
Quorum de medio lucida flamma micat.	
Arquatur cuncto capiti radiata corona,	
Phoebei referens uerticis alta decus.	140
Crura tegunt squamae fuluo distincta metallo.	
Ast unguis roseo tinguit honore color.	
Effigies inter pauonis mixta figuram	
Cernitur et pictam Phasidis inter auem	

[Her wonderful white beak is pure ivory brushed with iridescent emerald; when it opens, it is set with jewels. Her eyes are large: you would think they were twin sapphires with a bright flame shining from their midst. A radiant high crown has been fitted on her famous head, reflecting the brilliance of Phoebus at his peak. Scales adorned with tawny gold cover her legs, but a lovely rose tints her claws. In appearance she seems to be a blend of the peacock's form and the painted bird of Phasis [the pheasant].]

Here, Lactantius demonstrates his declaration that in poetry, Christian truths are to be found ‘in allegorical dress and veiled in appearance.’¹⁰⁵ In this triumph of rhetoric, he employs the classical mode of portraiture (known as *effictio*) to list every perfect feature, and draw the eye of the beholder downwards, from top to toe (from beak to talon).¹⁰⁶ The *Phoenix*-poet’s response to this stylish sophistication demonstrates not only his powers of adaptation, but his own distinctive poetic craft. Lactantius’s *effictio* is copied, but the pagan reference to Phoebus Apollo is interpreted through metonymy as the ‘sun’ (line 305b), and the Latin description is expanded into a string of four short similes, introduced by four different terms, *swa*, *gelicast*, *swylce*, *onlicost*. Instead of Lactantius’s exotic sapphires, emerald and ivory, the phoenix’s beak is likened to glass or a jewel, and his eyes to a gemstone set in the more familiar gold. But as if to compensate for the lack of rich material artifice, the poet highlights the artificial nature of the reborn phoenix by comparing him not to just a gem, but to a gem *skilfully* set through the *craft* of smiths in *hammered* gold:

ond þæt nebb lixeð	
<i>swa</i> glæs oþþe gim, geaflas scyne	300
innan ond utan. Is seo eaggebyrd	
stearc ond hiwe <i>stane gelicast</i>	
<i>gladum gimme þonne in goldfate</i>	
<i>smiþa orþoncum biseted weorþeð.</i>	
Is ymb þone sweoran <i>swylce</i> sunnan hring	305
beaga beorhtast brogden feðrum.	
Wrætlic is seo womb neopan, wundrum fæger,	
scir ond scyne. Is se scyld ufan	
frætsum gefeged ofer þæs fugles bæc.	
Sindon þa scanca scyllum biweaxen,	310
fealwe fotas. Se fugel is on hiwe	
æghwæs ænlic, <i>onlicost</i> þean	
wynnum geweaxen þæs gewritu secgað.	

[and the beak shines *like glass or a gem*; his jaws are resplendent, within and without. The nature of the eye is piercing and in colour *most like a stone, a bright gem, which is set in beaten-out gold by the skill of smiths*. Around its neck,

like a circlet of the sun, is the brightest of rings, braided with feathers. Wonderful is the belly beneath, marvellously beautiful, bright and shining. The crest above is fitted together splendidly, over the bird's back. The legs, the yellow claws, are covered with scales. In colour, the bird is in every way unique, *most like a peacock*, grown with joys, of which writings speak.]

In developing the simile of the goldsmiths' craft, the poet recalls other vernacular visions of treasure and its fabrication, such as the legend of Weland the Smith, or the Christian depiction of heaven as a treasure-filled hall.¹⁰⁷ This image of a stone set in beaten gold also sounds like a simile in Cynewulf's *Elene*, which describes how the blessed will pass through the fires of Doomsday and 'will be smelted, sundered from sins, as pure gold which in the burning is wholly purged of every impurity by the fire of the furnace, and refined and melted.'¹⁰⁸ The goldsmith simile also alludes to the explicit exegesis in the second half of *The Phoenix*, where the fire-brand that consumes the phoenix is interpreted as the furnace of Doomsday, 'when fire will destroy the transitory wealth of the land, and flame will wholly consume the possessions of the earth, voraciously grip the appled gold and greedily gulp the land's treasures.'¹⁰⁹

Most importantly, this passage illustrates how the simile has been adopted into the poet's own repertoire, and how it is woven into the poem's structure. Two similes in this passage, the goldsmith image and the likening of the phoenix's throat-ring to 'a circlet of the sun' (*swylce sunnan hring*) are linked through echoic repetition (highlighted in bold below) to the vision of the blessed in heaven, thereby implying that the phoenix's ornaments are the gem-encrusted halos of the blessed:

ond þæt nebb lixeð	
swa glæs oþþe gim, geaflas scyne	300
innan ond utan. Is seo eaggebyrd	
stearc ond hiwe stane gelicast	
gladum gimme þonne in goldfate	
smiþa orþoncum biseted weorþeð.	
Is ymb þone sweoran swylce sunnan hring	305
beaga beorhtast brogden feðrum.	

[and the beak shines like glass or a gem; his jaws are resplendent, within and without. The nature of the eye is piercing and in colour most like a stone, a bright gem, which is set in beaten-out gold by the skill of smiths. Around its neck, like a circlet of the sun, is the brightest of rings, braided with feathers.]

Weorc anra gehwæs
beorhte bliceð in þam bliþan ham
 fore onsyne ecan dryhtnes, 600
 symle in sibbe, **sunnan** gelice.
 Þær se **beorhta beag**, **brogden** wundrum
 eorcnan**stanum**, eadigra gehwam
 hlifað ofer heafde. Heafelan **lixað**,
 þrymme biþeahte. 605

[The deeds of each one will shine brightly in that joyful home before the face of the everlasting Lord, perpetually in peace, like the sun. There that bright crown, wonderfully braided with precious stones, rises over the head of each of the blessed. Their heads gleam, covered with glory.]

The similes in *The Phoenix* are thus more than ornamental eye-catching devices. They are entwined in the poem's two-part structure, and tied into the artifice of the allegory.¹¹⁰

We have seen in this chapter how effectively the *Phoenix*-poet adapted the Latinate patterns of anaphora and the simile in the *De aue phoenix*, and how he even adopted such devices into his own style. Vernacular devices aid him in the task of adaptation. The anaphora is interlaced with the envelope pattern, alliteration, rhythm, rhyme, and assonance, and the similes are layered with compounds and echoic repetition. Such vernacular devices serve various roles. On the surface, they help to make the Latinate patterns sound familiar, and even traditional, as they echo passages elsewhere in vernacular verse. The vernacular sound-play around the anaphora not only intensifies the passage's rhetorical effect, but actually tries to express the inexpressible, by singing and celebrating the joys of heaven in a harmony of sound. Further, vernacular devices blend prolepsis and retrospect, in connecting

descriptions of paradise with the allegorical interpretations in the poem's second half. Likewise, echoic repetition links the 'decorative' similes in the first half with their Christian interpretation in the second, thus tying them into the artifice of the allegory, so that the reborn phoenix glows with christological splendour.

The poet's skill in combining the two different traditions is flaunted in the closing passage of *The Phoenix*, a masterstroke of extravagant artifice. Eleven lines of flamboyant macaronic verse enact the poem's two-part structure of Latin-derived verse alongside freer vernacular composition. In this celebration of learning, traditional vernacular formulas are aligned with typical Latin hexameter endings.¹¹¹ The Latin fragments are made to conform to the stylistic requirements of Old English verse. The incorrect doubling of *t* in *mittem* suggests that its first long vowel should be stressed in order to fulfil vernacular metrical 'rules.' Likewise, *mereri* has been spelt incorrectly as *merueri* to supply the necessary two stressed syllables to complete the line's metre. Variation functions as a kind of gloss, for the misspelt *merueri* is clarified as 'to deserve' through being placed in apposition to *begietan* (669a).

Many of the Latin phrases are rhythmical and marked by homoeoteleuton (*maxima regna; lucis et pacis; blandem et mittem; sine fine; laude perenne*). The passage is also woven together through echoic repetition, both in the Latin (*lucis*) and in the Old English (*þæt we motun her, þær we motum*). And the change from 'here' (*þæt we motun her*) to 'there' (*þær we motum*), highlighted by incremental repetition, marks the movement from this world to the next.¹¹² While the two languages are divided by the caesura, they are fastened together by alliteration. There is double alliteration: *secan ... gesittan sedibus ... / lifgan ... lisse lucis ... / agan eardinga alma ... / brucan blæddaga, blandem*; as well as a combination of double and cross alliteration: *geseon sigora Frean sine fine*, culminating in a closing alliterative line *eadge ... englum Alleluia*, that lifts us to a vision of heaven.

The shift from exegesis to a vision of heaven is indicated by the poet's inclusive address to the audience (marked by the use of three first-person pronouns). The binding of the verses, and the more static discourse of praise and prayer, tells us that we have

reached beyond inexpressibility into the artifice of eternity. This move from plain verse to the poetic coda is highlighted visually, for the passage begins with a point and a capital *h* on *Hafað*:¹¹³

Hafað us alyfed lucis auctor
þæt we motun her merueri
goddædum begietan gaudia in celo.
Þær we motum maxima regna 670
secan ond gesittan, sedibus altis
lifgan in lisse lucis et pacis,
agan eardinga alma letitie,
brucan blæddaga, blandem et mittem
geseon sigora Frean sine fine 675
ond Him lof singan laude perenne
eadge mid englum. Alleluia.

[The Author of light has granted to us that we may here earn, and obtain through good deeds, the joys in heaven. There we may seek out and occupy the greatest realms, live in the bliss of light and peace upon high thrones, possess dwellings of cherishing happiness, enjoy days of glory, look upon the gentle and mild Lord of victories without end and sing praise to Him, blessed among the angels, in perpetual laud. Alleluia.]

The welding of Latin fragments with vernacular verse symbolizes the *Phoenix*-poet's artistic achievement in bridging the Latin and vernacular traditions. In the macaronic, hexameter endings toe the line of Old English poetic 'rules,' just as in the poem as a whole, an array of Latin material is reshaped as 'traditional' Old English verse. Just as the Latin lines are surrounded by Old English in this ending, so are the Latinate devices of anaphora and the simile surrounded by vernacular aural patterns – especially the harmonics of repetition. And just as these Latin lines are adapted into the structure of Old English verse, so are the Latinate devices in the whole poem drawn into the wider structure of the allegory.

In the following chapter, we shall look at a vernacular poem no less preoccupied with visions of heaven, but one that is modelled on a very different source, Anglo-Latin verse.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Dead End? *Judgment Day II*

This chapter examines the style of the Old English poem *Judgment Day II*, a vernacular rendering of the Latin poem *De die iudicii*, variously attributed to Bede or Alcuin.¹ Our focus will be on how a late tenth-century Old English poet responds to explicitly biblical Anglo-Latin verse, which shuns the sophistries of classical rhetoric in favour of a plainer Christian rhetoric.² As we shall see, the adaptation of this Christian verse is characterized first and foremost by its faithfulness to the source, resulting in a highly ‘Latinate’ rendering, one that has shed many of the traditional features of vernacular verse, often to the detriment of the poetry.

Judgment Day II is preserved uniquely in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201, an eleventh-century manuscript thought to be of Worcester provenance.³ The poem is embedded among a miscellany of mostly prose homilies, penitential and legal texts, many of which are associated with the renowned homilist, Wulfstan (*ob.* 1023), bishop of Worcester and archbishop of York, whose vernacular sermon style has been shown to rely in part on oral methods of persuasion.⁴ Given the abundance of Wulfstanian material in this manuscript, it is intriguing to note that a part of *Judgment Day II* is interpolated in a prose vernacular homily written in the style of Wulfstan, Napier XXIX, preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113.⁵ (Most likely, it is the homily that is quoting *Judgment Day II*.)⁶

So although *Judgment Day II* bears one of the more unprepossessing editorial titles in the Old English poetic corpus (lagging behind *Judgment Day I*), the poem cannot be dismissed as minor: not only does it draw on familiar poetic themes such as the soul-and-body legend and the *Christus medicus* motif,⁷ but it is also well connected to eminent and eloquent Anglo-Saxons. And while sin, penitence, and the horrors of hell may not be such captivating themes today, the poem is nonetheless caught in the cross-fire of

debates that help define contemporary Anglo-Saxon literary studies: the interaction of Anglo-Latin and vernacular verse;⁸ the relationships of texts to their manuscript context;⁹ the border-lines between poetry and prose (and between verse and homilies);¹⁰ the decay of the Old English poetic tradition.¹¹

In order to measure the task faced by the Old English poet, we must first consider his source. The *Versus de die iudicii*, a poetic meditation on Judgment Day and its terrors, was one of the most widely admired of all Anglo-Latin poems, both in England and on the Continent.¹² There are some forty-one surviving manuscripts from England and the Continent, and various entries in monastic book-lists testify to numerous lost versions.¹³ *De die iudicii* is echoed by a host of Carolingian authors, including Paschasius Radbertus, Engelmodus, Mico, Paul the Deacon, and Paulinus of Aquileia.¹⁴ The poem was also widely circulated in England.¹⁵ The eleventh-century scholar, Byrhtferth of Ramsey, quotes the whole poem in the *Historia Regum*,¹⁶ and recasts a section of the poem as a sermon on Doomsday in his *Vita S. Ecgwini*.¹⁷

What is not certain is who wrote the poem. The two main candidates are Bede and Alcuin.¹⁸ Bede makes no mention of a poem on the Day of Judgment in his own catalogue of works.¹⁹ But the manuscript tradition has long assigned the poem specifically to him: roughly three quarters of the surviving manuscripts contain titles and colophons to that effect.²⁰ Byrhtferth of Ramsey, who was learned in Bede's writings, certainly thought *De die iudicii* was by Bede, for the rubric heading the citation in the *Historia regum* clearly states that this is 'a lamentation of Bede the priest' (*lamentatio Bedae presbyteri*).²¹ And in one late Old English manuscript, the poem is incorporated into Bede's *De temporum ratione*.²² The main ground for the attribution is a nine-line epilogue skilfully woven into the poem, which dedicates it to Bede's friend and mentor, *Acca pater*, Bishop of Hexham (709–31), and explains that the poem was composed at Acca's request (*tua iussa sequens*).²³

Nevertheless, various scholars have recently cast doubts on the attribution to Bede, and have set out a strong case for Alcuin's authorship. In his Jarrow lecture in 1993, Michael Lapidge pointed out a number of metrical solecisms in *De die iudicii*: *stātim* (line 16); *dāta* (line 42); *uerēcundans* (line 70) *flūuius* (line 82); *iōcus*

(line 118); *des̄dia* (line 120).²⁴ Such errors would be highly surprising in a poem by the author of *De arte metrica*, who took a stern view of poets who indulge in unwar-ranted metrical licences.²⁵ We can also add a number of other stylistic infelicities which give grounds for suspicion. There are a surprisingly high number of golden lines in *De die iudicii* – about 5 per cent of lines are golden according to Bede's strict definition, and about 12 per cent are modelled more loosely on the pattern – a fact which contradicts Bede's recommendation that the device should be employed sparingly.²⁶ There is also an unusually high number of alliterating cadences compared with Bede's verse.²⁷

Rob Getz has shown in a persuasive paper that the poem cannot be passed off as Bede's juvenilia.²⁸ If the poem were by Bede, it would have been written after 709, when Acca was elevated to the bishopric, and this implies that *De die iudicii* was written later than Bede's verse Life of St Cuthbert (which was started soon after 705). But Getz demonstrates that the verse Life of St Cuthbert is an incomparably more skilled piece in its sensitivity to metrical quantity, enjambment, and use of complex verse sentences. So if we were to attribute *De die iudicii* to Bede, we would have to assume a surprising lapse in his poetic art after the composition of the verse Life of St Cuthbert.²⁹

Alcuin's case, on the other hand, has been shown to be more plausible. The traditional ascription of *De die iudicii* to Alcuin rests on one ninth-century manuscript (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 89, fols. 1–2) where *De die iudicii* is preceded, without a break and in the same hand, by a prayer that is classed among the *dubia* of Alcuin.³⁰ Patrizia Lendinara has recently shown that Alcuin relies extensively on *De die iudicii*, in his verse as well as his letters, in a way which goes far beyond occasional superficial reminiscences.³¹ One particularly striking example, in the epilogue to *De die iudicii*, is the phrase *uiue deo felix*, which is a valedictory formula in many of Alcuin's poems and letters, as Andy Orchard has shown.³²

Rob Getz has argued convincingly that the poem's sources, tone, images, and formulaic usage strongly suggest that the author was the young Alcuin of York. He contends that citations in *De die iudicii* (for example, from Venantius Fortunatus's *Vita S. Martini*, Dracontius, and even Licentius) indicate Alcuin's authorship, for

these are not the works that most influenced Bede's verse Life of St Cuthbert.³³ He further shows that the author of *De die iudicii* and Alcuin both quote from a little known poem of Paulinus of Nola, which concludes his eighth letter, and which is addressed to a fellow poet Licentius. And one whole line in *De die iudicii* (line 15) is adapted from an obscure poem by this same Licentius, who is only known to be quoted elsewhere in Alcuin's poem on the saints of York. It is thus highly likely that *De die iudicii* is the work of Alcuin, composed before he left York for the Continent, an event which is likely to have occurred only in 786, as Bullough has shown.³⁴

Of course, the strong evidence for Alcuin's authorship still leaves unexplained the question of the epilogue to Bede's mentor, Acca. The version of the poem used by the vernacular poet of *Judgment Day II* seems to have contained the dedication to Acca, since line 158 from the epilogue is worked into the opening of the vernacular translation.³⁵ So the poet of *Judgment Day II* probably believed he was translating Bede. He (or the scribe) also copied the initial rubric *incipit uersus Bede pres-biter* ('here begins the verse of the priest, Bede'), and used it as the incipit of his poem.³⁶

For our purposes, however, the primary concern is not whether the real author was Bede or Alcuin, but that *De die iudicii* stems from the distinctive Anglo-Latin milieu, of which Bede and Alcuin (and Aldhelm) are the core authors. Alcuin certainly saw himself as Bede's follower and heir;³⁷ he was steeped in Bede's works, and shared with him the preference of plain style.³⁸ In fact, precisely the difficulty in establishing who among the two is the author of *De die iudicii* attests to the great commonality of their Anglo-Latin poetic idiom. Our task in this chapter, therefore, will be to assess how the vernacular poet responds to this Anglo-Latin aesthetic, and examine how this distinctive insular poetic style is rendered into Old English verse.

We can start the discussion with the beginning of the poems, where the poets stake out their style. The first lines of *De die iudicii* are a model of good Anglo-Latin verse:

Inter florigeras fecundi cespitis herbas,
Flamine uentorum resonantibus undique ramis,
Arboris umbriferae maestus sub tegmine solus

[While I sat sad and alone under the covering of a shady tree, among the flowering grasses of the fertile earth, with the branches echoing on every side from the wind's breath, I was suddenly disturbed by a bitter lament. I sang these mournful songs because my mind was sad ...]

The poet avoids metrical monotony, to achieve verse that is 'the most pleasing, the most beautiful, the best.'³⁹ There is even a rhythmical symmetry, for lines 1–2 are a metrical mirror to lines 4–5, thus emphasising the middle line and its central adjective, *maestus* ('sad').⁴⁰ These verses display the pleasing arrangement of words. Lines 3 and 4 display enjambment, a feature of verse that Bede admires.⁴¹ Moreover, every line displays hyperbaton (the disruption of word-order), and in particular, lines 1–2 and 4–5 are patterned by the kind of hyperbaton that Bede especially recommends, the separation of nouns from their associated adjectives: *florigeras ... herbas; resonantibus ... ramis; planctu ... amaro*.⁴² In some cases, hyperbaton produces leonine rhyme (as in line 1). And in line 5, this artful word-order culminates in a particularly mannered arrangement, the 'golden line' (the separation of two adjectives from their associated nouns by a medial verb), an interlacing of words that is praised in the *De arte metrica* as 'the best and most beautiful arrangement of a dactylic hexameter.'⁴³

In theme, the opening lines weave a complex mesh of undertones and allusions. At first sight, these lines seem to promise classical pastoral verse. The scene opens with the speaker sitting in a glade, in what seems to be a blissful Arcadian idyll.⁴⁴ These lines sound Vergilian: they remind one of the first *Eclogue*, which opens with a figure 'lying under the canopy of a spreading beech.'⁴⁵ There are also echoes of the *Georgics*;⁴⁶ and the phrase *undique ramis* recalls the *Aeneid*.⁴⁷ These echoes seem to suggest that this will be the poetry of eroticism and emotion. But as in Vergil's pastoral verse, all is not what it seems. An ominous note is introduced by the sinister compound *umbrifer* ('shade-bearing'), which distinctly recalls Vergil's gloomy vision of the underworld.⁴⁸ The sylvan scene may also suggest the dense forests

around the entrance to Hades, and the stygian groves.

This highly classical opening may seem out of tune with the declared animosity to pagan rhetoric that Bede and Alcuin espoused.⁴⁹ But in fact, the scene is set here for the unequivocal rejection of classical pastoral and its displacement by biblical themes. The allusion to a Christian poem in the opening line (Aldhelm's *Enigma* 51) already introduces a note of ambiguity into these apparently classical lines.⁵⁰ In addition, the two compounds *umbrifer* and *floriger* place the lines firmly in the Anglo-Latin school of Christian verse. These two compounds were specifically recommended by Aldhelm, and *floriger* is frequently used by Alcuin.⁵¹ These compounds strengthen the ambivalence: *floriger* ('flower-bearing') sounds innocuous enough, but in fact it recalls a description of the expulsion from the Garden of Eden by Sedulius (the only poet quoted in Bede's handbook on rhetoric) as well as apocalyptic visions of 'a field of flowers.'⁵² And *umbrifer* recalls 'the shadow of death' (*umbra mortis*), a familiar phrase from the Book of Job and the psalms.

This shift from earthly beauty to the themes of mutability and salvation is found elsewhere in Alcuin's verse. Patrizia Lendinara has shown that the opening lines bear strong stylistic resemblance to the beginning of a later poem by Alcuin, *O mea cella*.⁵³ Both poems start with an evocation of pastoral idyll. In *O mea cella* the poet recalls his cell in a wood of rustling boughs, surrounded by streams and flowering meadows (a vision which has recently been interpreted as a metaphor for Alcuin's lost youth at York).⁵⁴ Both poems thus start with a poetic metaphor, a *locus amoenus*, a flawed vision of beauty, and then move away from fiction towards religious truth. The depiction of the blossoming grove may thus really be an image for Latin poetry: as the poet begins his verse, he enters 'the dense wood of Latinity,' as Aldhelm calls it,⁵⁵ but he grows aware of mutability and mortality, and 'strives to touch other branches' – the truth of salvation.⁵⁶ The subtle double-edge of the opening lines prepares the way for the explicit biblical vision of Judgment that follows.

How does the Old English poet respond to the subtleties of the source? In the rest of the poem, as we shall see, the Old English poet attempts a faithful translation of the unambiguously Christian verse, and generally follows the convention of rendering one

hexameter with two English lines. But the opening lines pose greater difficulties. On the one hand, the source here strongly evokes classical verse, and the style is subtle and allusive. On the other hand, the opening is where the vernacular tradition demands the most loyal allegiance. The poet's response to this challenge produced perhaps the best lines of the poem:

Hwæt! Ic ana sæt innan bearwe, 1
mid helme beþeht, holte tomiddes,
þær þa wæterburnan swegdon and urnon
on middan gehæge, eal swa ic secge.
Eac þær wynwyrta weoxon and bleowon 5
innon þam gemonge on ænlicum wonge,
and þa wudubemas wagedon and swegdon;
þurh winda gryre wolcn wæs gehrered,
and min earme mod eal wæs gedrefed. 9

[Lo! I sat alone within a grove, covered over by a canopy, in the middle of a wood, where the water-streams murmured and ran, in the middle of an enclosure, just as I say. Delightful plants grew and flowered there as well, within the gathering in the peerless meadow, and the trees of the wood waved and rustled; through the violence of the winds the sky was disturbed, and my wretched mind was entirely troubled.]

As opposed to the faithful translation in the rest of the poem, the Old English poet allows himself a little more leeway here. And he manages to give a flavour of vernacular verse, by employing a few traditional devices designed to intensify this depiction of a troubled idyll. The 'pathetic fallacy' (investing inanimate nature with human emotion) is highlighted through vernacular aural effects: assonance and alliteration (*ana ... innan*) draw attention to the speaker's solitary confinement, an impression strengthened by the accumulation of prepositions that follow (*innan, tomidde, on middan, innon*).⁵⁷ The same devices contribute to a sinister undertone: *wæterburnan ... swegdon / ... swa ... / ... wynwyrta ... weoxon / ... wonge / ... wudubemas ... wagedon ... swegdon / ... winda ... wolcn*. At the end of the passage, apposition underscores the pathetic fallacy by suggesting a parallel between the speaker's

state of mind and the unsettled weather: ‘the sky was disturbed, and my wretched mind was entirely troubled’ (*wolcn wæs gehrered, / and min earme mod eal wæs gedrefed*, lines 8b–9).⁵⁸ The poet also employs ambiguous diction (*swegan* can mean ‘rustle,’ or ‘make an uproar’ and *winda gryre* can mean ‘the violence of winds’ or ‘the terror of winds’).⁵⁹ And there is (just) one poetic formula, the phrase *ænlicum wonge*, which echoes the later description of paradise (*þa ænlican geatu / neorxnawonges*, lines 63b–64a).⁶⁰

Nevertheless, the most striking aspect of the opening is how untraditional it is. As opposed to other Old English translators (such as the *Phoenix*-poet), many of the conventions of vernacular openings are here sacrificed for faithfulness. After the customary call for attention, *hwæt*, we would expect to be hailed with the greeting of oral tradition: ‘we have heard tell’ (*we ... gefrunon*).⁶¹ Then we would expect to hear of heroic deeds performed in days gone by, *in fyrndagum*. But instead, we hear the lyric voice of a solitary speaker in the present, introduced by *ic*, meditating on private emotion, and describing a Latin, literary theme, a *locus amoenus* – a delightful plain watered by streams.⁶² Further, there is no variation, what Klaeber has described as ‘the very soul of the Old English poetical style,’ and there are no gnomic state-ments.⁶³ There is scant use of poetic diction. The metre is surprisingly unvaried, and structural alliteration is often weak (in lines 3, 4, and 9).⁶⁴ Leonine rhyme (inspired by the hyperbaton and leonine rhymes in the source) even replaces structural alliteration at lines 3 and 4.⁶⁵

Another untraditional feature that is directly borrowed from the Latin source is the patterning of the lines through word-order. Doublets (finite verb-pairs) such as *swegdon and urnon*; *weoxon and blewon*; *wagedon and swegdon* are arranged in the same metrical position, in the b-verse in alternate lines, and alliterating with the compounds (*wæterburnan, wynwyrta, wudubeamas*). The compounds also rely for their effect on their arrangement in the lines, for like the Latin compounds *floriger, umbrifer, and praetrusti*, they also occur in the same position in alternate half-lines. The syntactic symmetry of *wolcn wæs gehrered, / ... eal wæs gedrefed* (‘the sky was disturbed, and my wretched mind was entirely troubled’) may even be an attempt to copy the symmetry of the golden line at the end of the Latin passage.

It is striking that when the poet does introduce traditional vernacular elements, these are usually not poetic, but rather resemble vernacular prose. The poem thus inhabits the borderlands between verse and prose, and its style tends towards what some scholars have termed ‘versiprose’ or ‘prosaic poetry.’⁶⁶ The regularity of the metre produces half-lines with a two-stress rhythm that almost sounds like Wulfstanian prose, with its continuous series of two-stress phrases.⁶⁷ The rhyming doublets are also characteristic of sermon style, as are the leonine rhymes.⁶⁸ The phrase *eal swa ic secge* (line 4b) recalls meaningless bywords found in sermons.⁶⁹ The passage as a whole thus resembles a homily, such as one by Wulfstan, who as Dorothy Whitelock put it, ‘expended much care on the balance of his sentence, often accentuating the parallelism of clauses by identity of rhythm, and then drawing attention to a conclusion by a subtle change.’⁷⁰

The surprisingly untraditional nature of the adaptation that we have seen in the opening lines becomes even more pronounced in the rest of the poem. We shall see that as the source turns into an explicitly Christian poem, the translation becomes more faithful, moving even further away from the style of traditional Old English verse.

The opening lines of *De die iudicii* set the scene for the unequivocal rejection of pagan poetry and its displacement by biblical themes. It is as if the poet was lulling us to believe we are in Arcadia, but his intention is really to warn us to be on our guard against such enticements, for Doomsday is nigh. The following lines thus move swiftly away from the pastoral towards the penitential. The poet now recalls the sins he has committed, and is filled with a premonition of Judgment Day. Suddenly, he is cast headlong into a biblical narrative:

Utpote commemorans scelerum commissa meorum,
 Et maculas uitae, mortisque inamabile tempus,
 Iudicique diem horrendo examine magnum (lines 6–8)

[... when I remembered the sins I had committed, the blotches on my life and the loveless time of death, the great

Judgment Day with its fearful trial ...]

As the source becomes openly biblical, and loses all hint of ambiguity, the Old English poet adopts an even more faithful attitude to translation, and renders one hexameter fairly literally with two Old English lines. The result of this process is a close version of the source, but rather uninspired vernacular verse, whose links with the Old English poetic tradition have been weakened. Even more markedly than in the opening lines, the traditional rhetorical devices mostly recall vernacular prose. For example, there is an unusually high count of prosaic diction in the poem: there are only eighteen poetic words, and the majority of these are the customary designations for God (*frea*, *metod*, *nergend*, *brytta*, *peoden*).⁷¹ There are also very few formulas; again, most of these are set formulas for God, such as *mihtig frea*, *wealdend engla*, *heofonrices weard*, *swegles brytta*, *sigores brytta*.⁷² The poet again seems to imitate the idiosyncratic sermon style of Wulfstan, who usually calls God *drihten* rather than *hælend*.⁷³ The use of intensive qualifiers (*swiðe*, *swiðlice*, *swiðlic*, *eal*) also recalls sermon style, as do the references to eternity (*æfre*, *a*), the exclamations (*eala*, *la*, *wa*), and the preponderance of *un*-compounds.⁷⁴

Moreover, the rhetorical devices that the poet directly borrows from the source also tend to be prosaic, or at least not primarily poetic. Devices such as polyptoton are characteristic of biblical prose, and other borrowed devices (apostrophe, rhetorical question, incremental repetition, doublets, inexpressibility topos, and the 'thought, word, and deed' triad) are reminiscent of vernacular homilies.⁷⁵

Apostrophe is one of the most noticeable devices that the poet borrows throughout the poem – after all, the whole poem is the soul's address to the sinful body. Apostrophe is typical of sermons, where the preacher addresses his congregation with phrases such as *leofan men*, or *men þa leofestan* (*fratres carissimi* in Latin).⁷⁶ In *Judgment Day II*, there are no fewer than twenty-two addresses to *þu* in the singular, implying an authorial literary address to a single reader, rather than to an audience.⁷⁷ (But in the version of the poem in Napier XXIX, these apostrophes tend to be in the plural.)⁷⁸ Some apostrophes are carried straight from the Latin without embellishment. For example, the soul's apostrophe to the

body's veins, *nunc rogo, nunc uenae* (line 13), is literally transferred into the English, *nu ic eow, æddran, ealle bidde* (line 26), as is a later address to the flesh (*caro*, line 39; *flæsc*, line 78a).

Some addresses are embellished, however. The apostrophe to the mind and tongue (*mens ... lingua*, lines 33-4) is carried straight into English *earme geþanc ... synnigu tunge*, lines 65b and 67b), but to give it greater force, the poet adds the exclamation *la*, which is typical of sermon style.⁷⁹ A later outburst (*Quid, caro, quid facie ... / Quae modo, uae!*, line 87) is turned into a sequence of three dramatic rhetorical questions, a characteristic of the soul's address to the body in homilies: *Hwæt dest þu, la, flæsc? Hwæt dreogest þu nu? / Hwæt miht þu ... gewepan?* (lines 176-7).⁸⁰ This mark of homiletic style reaches a climax at the end of the poem. Following the three-line closing question in the Latin, *Judgment Day II* ends with an extraordinarily long six-line rhetorical question addressed to all mankind (lines 302-7).

The apostrophes are emphasized by another pattern characteristic of vernacular prose: incremental repetition.⁸¹ These repetitions are inspired by the repeated *rogo* in the Latin source, but the vernacular poet develops them, and enlists them to underline the change of perspective, from the speaker's solipsistic obsession with his own body; *nu ic eow, æddran, ealle bidde* (line 25); to his address to an audience; *Ic bidde eow benum nu ða* (line 33); and later, to a wider awareness of mankind: *Ic bidde, man, þæt þu gemune* (line 123). Another pattern of repetition in the source underlines the importance of memory during acts of penitence: *commemorans* (line 6); *memorans* (line 12); *memento* (line 47); *memor* (line 62). This pattern is borrowed and developed in the Old English, partly as a structural mechanism, but also to highlight the shift in perspective away from the anxieties of a solitary speaker to a wider reflection on everyone's fate at Judgment Day: *synna gemunde* (line 12b); *Ic gemunde* (line 21a); *Ic gemunde þis mid me and ic mearn swiðe / and ic murnigende cwæð mode gedrefed* (lines 24-5); *gemyne eac on mode hu micel is þe wite* (line 92); *Ic bidde, man, þæt þu gemune hu micel bið se broga* (line 123).

Another characteristically homiletic device in *De die iudicii* is the inexpressibility topos: a sequence of negative statements, yoked by anaphora and ending in antithesis, usually employed to describe heaven or hell. As the topos has been covered amply in chapter 3,

I want to highlight just one particular aspect, as it is one of the few instances of successful adaptation of Latin rhetoric in this poem. The Old English poet seems to have recognised the ultimate inspiration behind the Latin passage: *Aeneid* Book VI (lines 275–81), with its list of personified cares and troubles that stand before the door to Hades.⁸² The poet of *De die iudicii* does not make much of the Vergilian trace, since his emphasis is on biblical allusions. The characteristics absent from hell are simply listed, in a long passage of asyndeton: *somnus iners, torporque grauis, desidia pigra* and so on ('indolent sleep, heavy torpor, slack idleness,' line 120). But the vernacular poet seems to have recognized that the list goes back to Vergilian personifications, so in his rendering he concentrates only on 'Sleep': he personifies it, and employs the traditional devices of alliteration and assonance to dramatize its slack slinking away: *and se earma flyhð uncraeftiga slæp / sleac mid sluman slincan on hinder* ('and wretched, helpless Sleep flees, slack with slumber, slinking behind,' lines 241–2).⁸³

The vernacular poet has a predilection for borrowing devices that have a biblical ring. This inclination is most evident in his adaptation of polyptoton, the play on several morphological derivations of the same root. Bede defines polyptoton as 'the same word is used in different cases' and illustrates it with biblical quotations (Romans 11.36, and Psalm 67.15–17).⁸⁴ Indeed, polyptoton is one of the most frequently employed types of repetition in the Bible.⁸⁵ The vernacular poet is not able to adapt all instances of polyptoton, because of the demands of structural alliteration and the lack of a future or future perfect tense in Old English. So, for example, *ille dies ueniet, iudex dum uenerit orbis* ('that day will come, when the judge of the world will [have] come,' line 36) is simply altered to *ac se dæg cymeð ðonne demeð god* ('but that day will come when God will judge,' line 71). Nevertheless, the vernacular poet does attempt to imitate other occurrences of polyptoton in *De die iudicii*. For example, a double pattern of polyptoton on *esse* ('to be') and *cunctus* ('all') in the source is transferred directly into the English text:

Qui sunt, qui fuerant, fuerint uel quique futuri
Cunctaque cunctorum cunctis arcana patebunt
67–8)

(lines

[those who are, have been, or will be in the future; and everyone's every secret will be universally revealed.]

oþþe þa þe wæron oððe woldon beon
oþþe towearde geteald wæron awiht.
Ðonne eallum beoð ealra gesweotolude
digle
geþancas (lines
133–136a)

[or those who were, or those who would be, or those who by any means will have been numbered in time to come. Then the secret thoughts of all will be revealed to all.]

The slavish borrowing comes at a cost, for while the polyptoton is perfect, the verse is clumsy. The Latin future perfect tense (*fuertint*) is rather awkwardly rendered with the verb 'be' as an auxiliary (*towearde geteald wæron*, 'will have been numbered in time to come'). In these lines, we can clearly see the poet's determination to be faithful to the source, even at the expense of the traditional vernacular devices of metre and alliteration. The metre is weak, with line 134b hypermetric, and even the structural alliteration is made to serve the polyptoton, with the result that a word has to alliterate with itself to accommodate the pattern (*eallum ... ealra*, line 135).

The vernacular poet also relies on polyptoton to render other types of Latin repetition:

Felix o nimium, semperque in saecula felix (line
124)

[O how blessed, and always forever blessed]

Eala, se bið gesælig and ofersælig
and on worulda woruld wihta gesæligost (lines 248–9)

[O, he is blessed and exceedingly blessed and the most
blessed of creatures forever and ever ...]

The Latin repetition of *felix* is epanalepsis (repetition at the

beginning and end of a line).⁸⁶ The vernacular poet changes the epanalepsis into polyptoton, effected though a sequence of comparatives (*gesælig ... ofersælig / ... gesæligost*). He highlights this pattern with another distinctively biblical polyptoton, *worulda woruld*, which is not a direct translation of the Latin source, but a calque on *saecula saeculorum*; the phrase is current in vernacular poetry, and is often employed at the close of vernacular prose homilies.

The vernacular poet's biblical zeal can also be seen in his adaptation of another line in the source: *tristius et caelum tenebris obducitur atris* ('the rather gloomy sky is covered with dismal shadows,' line 53). *De die iudicii* here is echoing Aldhelm's *Enigma* 100, but the vernacular poet has turned Aldhelm's line into a series of biblical repetitions.⁸⁷ He translates: *Eal bið eac upheofon / sweart and gesworcen, swiðe gebuxsað, / deorc and dimhiw, and dwolma sweart* ('all the heavens will also become black and darkened, extremely gloomy, black and dark in colour,' lines 104–6), which recalls the repetitions in Zephaniah 1.15: 'a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness' (*dies tenebrarum et caliginis dies nebulae et turbinis*).

This emphasis on biblical Latinity creates a poem that may be learned and Latinate, but as vernacular verse is rather bland, for the poet's faithfulness to Latin devices often comes at the expense of vernacular poetic techniques. In order not to damn the poet of *Judgment Day II* unduly, however, we should conclude by discussing perhaps his most successful moments in the poem: his adaptation of the 'thought, word, and deed' triad, a Christian Latin rhetorical device, now famous from its inclusion in the *Confiteor*.

Unlike most rhetorical devices in the Latin source, 'thought, word, and deed' does not have roots in classical rhetoric, but rather stems from Christian Latin literature, and ultimately owes its dissemination to patristic influence and Irish inspiration.⁸⁸ Anglo-Latin authors including Bede and Alcuin frequently employ the triad.⁸⁹ 'Thought, word, and deed' was also used freely by vernacular homilists.⁹⁰ In *De die iudicii*, 'thought, word, and deed' is alluded to when the poet mentions the three agents of sin:

Pectoris et linguae, carnis uel crimina
saeua (line 21)

[The fierce crimes of the heart, the tongue and the flesh]

The vernacular poet evidently recognized ‘thought, word, and deed,’ for in his rendering, he suspends the structural rule of alliteration in order to preserve the threefold enumeration. Moreover, in order to keep the triadic form, the poet also bends his own rule of rendering one hexameter with two Old English lines, and packs most of the translation into just one line:

breostes and **tungan** and **flæsces** swa
some (line 42)

[of the breast, of the tongue and of the flesh also]

A similar triad appears later on in *De die iudicii*:

quod **cor**, **lingua**, **manus**, tenebrosis gessit in
antris (line 69)

[What the heart, tongue, hand performed in shadowy caves]

On this occasion, the vernacular poet is not able simply to lift the triad into one Old English line, but he shows that he is keen to preserve the threefold structure by stretching the triad over three Old English lines:

eal þæt seo **heorte** hearmes **geþohte**
oððe seo **tunge** to teonan **geclypede**
oþþe mannes **hand** manes
gefremede (lines 137–9)

[all that the heart has meditated over wrongdoing, or what the tongue has spoken in malice, or what man’s hand has performed of wickedness.]

Once again, the poet has resorted above all to a Latinate strategy – word order – to preserve the shape of the triad. The agents and actions of sin are paralleled, both between lines and within lines. The agents (‘heart,’ ‘tongue,’ and ‘hand’) are before the caesura, and the actions (‘thought,’ ‘spoken,’ ‘performed’) are

at the end of the line, thereby enclosing and highlighting the outcome of sin: harm, malice, wickedness (*hearm, teona, man*). Perhaps the poet is inspired here by the artful word-order (hyperbaton) of the source, and is trying to render this pattern in his translation.

It is enlightening, in this respect, to compare the adaptation of the triad in *Judgment Day II* with the more conventional versions in other Old English poems. ‘Thought, word, and deed’ usually appears in vernacular verse more as a thematic motif than as a triad. Often, its triadic shape is forgotten entirely, probably because of metrical and alliterative constraints, and the habit of variation. What is more, Old English poetry tends to favour the doublet, and so ‘thought, word, and deed’ is often dissolved into a sequence of word-pairs, for example:

mode and **dædum**
worde and **gewitte**, wise **þance** (Genesis A,
lines 1957b–1958)

[in mind and deed, in word and understanding, wise
thought]

ond wær weorðe **worda** ond **dæda**,
þeawa ond **geþonca** (Christ III,
lines 1582b–1583a)

[and be wary of words and deeds, behaviour and thoughts]

Moreover, since ‘word and deeds’ is an ancient and traditional Old English doublet, we often find the device rendered as ‘words and deeds,’ with ‘thought’ tacked on only as an afterthought:⁹¹

Ne eart ðu gedefe, ne dryhtnes þeow
clæne gecostad, ne cempa god,
wordum ond **weorcum** wel gecyþed,
halig in **heortan**. (Guthlac
A, lines 579–582a)

[You are not worthy, you are not a purely tested servant of
the Lord, nor a good warrior, well known for words and

deeds, holy in your heart]

In most of Old English poetry, therefore, the ‘thought, word, and deed’ motif has lost its distinctive triadic structure.⁹² So it is striking that the poet of *Judgment Day II* takes so much care to preserve the triad. Of the many examples of the ‘thought, word, and deed’ motif in vernacular poetry, there is only one other instance of such a triadic structure:

Sarge ge ne **sohton**, ne him swæslic **word**
frofre **gespræcon**, þæt hy þy freoran **hyge**
mode **gefengen**. Eall ge þæt me **dydan**,
to hynþum heofoncynge. (*Christ III*, lines 1510–1513a)

[You did not seek in sorrow, nor speak to them a friendly word in consolation, so that they might reach in their hearts to a happier state of mind. All that you did to me, as humiliation to the King of heaven.]

It is always difficult to establish the direction of influence between poems, because of the problems of dating Old English verse. But the similarities here are striking. Both the *Judgment Day II*-poet and the *Christ III*-poet use the shape of the Old English line to accommodate the triad. In both passages, word-order takes precedence over the more traditional techniques of metre and alliteration: for here the metre is fairly uninspired (Sievers type A in the first half-lines), and alliteration is faulty (no alliteration in line 1512). At the very least, these two poets are akin in their awareness of the significance of the triad, and their willingness to conserve it even at the cost of alliteration and metre.

Nevertheless, the treatment of the ‘thought, word, and deed’ triad in *Judgment Day II* is one of the few more inspired moments in the poem, where in spite of a clinging faithfulness to the source, the poet manages to transform a mere translation and adapt the Latinate pattern using traditional vernacular poetic devices. In the second appearance of ‘thought, word, and deed’ (lines 137–9), he uses a typically vernacular kind of paronomasia on *mān* (‘man’) and *mān* (‘crime’) to highlight the triad.⁹³ He also employs a vernacular kind of anaphora (*oððe ... oþþe*), as well as a string of

finite verbs with end-rhyme (*geþohte*, *geclypede*, *gefremede*).

Most importantly, however, the poet adapts the triad into the fabric of *Judgment Day II* through the use of echoic repetition that links the two instances of ‘thought, word, and deed,’ and thus connects the passages thematically.⁹⁴ These echoes act as rhetorical pointing, and pick out the underlying theme of the poem: that confession must be immediate because Doomsday is imminent. The echoes between the two passages are in bold:

Ne þær owiht inne ne belife
on **heortscræfe** heanra gylta,
þæt hit ne sy **dægcuð**, þæt þæt **dihle** wæs,
openum wordum eall abæred,
breostes and **tungan** and flæscas swa some. (lines 38–42)

[Let nothing of low sins survive inside in the heart’s recess,
so that that which was secret be not as clear as day, but all
things – of the breast and tongue and also the flesh – be laid
bare with open words.]

Donne eallum beoð ealra gesweotolude
digle geþancas on þære **dægtide**,
eal þæt seo **heorte** hearmes geþohte
oððe seo **tunge** to teonan geclypede
oþþe mannes hand manes gefremede
on þystrum **scræfum** þinga on eorðan (lines 135–40)

[Then the secret thoughts of all will be revealed to all at that
day-time: all the evil that the heart contemplated or the
tongue spoke in malice or the evil that the hand of man
performed in dark recesses, deeds on this earth.]

In addition to echoic repetition, a number of traditional vernacular devices underline the need to make a clean confession. Words for the hidden organs of the body are repeated: ‘tongue’ (*tungan*, *tunge*), ‘heart’ (*heortscræfe*, *heorte*), as well as words betokening concealment (*heortscræfe*, *scræfum*, *dihle*, *digle*), and these are contrasted with the command to lay secrets bare. Compounds add weight to this antithesis: a hapax compound suggesting emotional

concealment, *heortscræfe* ('heart-cave'), is contrasted with those compounds urging everything to be brought to the light of day (*dægcuð*, *dægtide*). Furthermore, *heortscræfe* actually encapsulates the 'pathetic fallacy,' by yoking together the natural world (-*scræfe*, 'cave') with the place of hidden feelings (*heort*-), and setting this secretive image against a natural image of openness: 'day-time' (*dægtide*) at Doomsday, when everything is 'day-known' (*dægcuð*).⁹⁵

The adaptation of the 'thought, word, and deed' triad in *Judgment Day II* is perhaps the most successful moment in the poem. Vernacular poetry is at its most powerful when patterns are combined, thus creating a densely layered poetic texture. The 'thought, word, and deed' is made beautiful (and thus effective), because it is adorned with other vernacular patterns, creating a highly wrought poetic moment, a whorl of poetic artifice that stands out in relief from the rest of the poem. What is more, the success of the adaptation here is enhanced by the threading of a rhetorical device into the weave of the poem – a technique which I have examined elsewhere in *The Phoenix* and other poems.

Nevertheless, this isolated poetic flourish cannot rescue the whole poem from the charge that faithfulness has undermined the traditional features of vernacular verse. The poet chooses to import faithfully Christian and biblical Latinate devices, such as the polyptoton that is so highly recommended by Bede. He deliberately eschews the 'falsities' of poetic diction and the 'fiction' of the heroic tradition, in order to pursue a plain style. But this attitude comes at a cost: the poem makes a break with the past, and the poetry loses its distinctive traits. Instead, the poem anticipates a new style, the rhythmical prose of eleventh-century homilies, such as sermons in the style of Wulfstan (among which the text is actually embedded in its manuscript), and even the weakened prosody of later didactic verse, such as the soul-and-body poetry of *The Grave* and *The Worcester Fragments*. With the rise of this homiletic style, we gain a sense of an ending: not just a vision of the final destination – Doomsday – but the end of the Old English poetic tradition.

CHAPTER FIVE

Through the Looking-Glass: *Riddles* 35 and 40

This chapter examines two Old English riddles, numbers 35 and 40, which alone among the Exeter Book collection are close renderings of Anglo-Latin poems by Aldhelm, abbot of Malmesbury and bishop of Sherbourne (c. 640–709), hailed as the father of Anglo-Latin literature and the ‘first English man of letters.’¹ Exeter Book *Riddle* 35 is a vernacular version of Aldhelm’s *Lorica* (‘Breastplate’), number 33 from his collection of one hundred *Enigmata*.² An earlier Northumbrian version of this *Enigma* has survived, known as *The Leiden Riddle*, as it is preserved in a manuscript (Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. Lat. Q. 106) held in the University Library at Leiden.³ *Riddle* 40, the longest in the Exeter Book, translates the longest and last *Enigma* in Aldhelm’s collection, number 100, entitled *Creatura* (‘Creation’).

In examining the methods of rendering Aldhelm’s *Enigmata* into the vernacular poetic idiom, this chapter shares a similar theme with the discussion of *Judgment Day II* in the previous chapter, as it deals with Old English translations of an Anglo-Latin author. However, I shall argue that the main challenges facing the translators of the riddles are of a different nature. Whereas the poet of *Judgment Day II* was confronted with a mainly aesthetic challenge (combining accurate translation with captivating poetry), the major difficulties facing the translators of the *Enigmata* are the embedding of the Christian context within the poem, the adaptation of Aldhelm’s figurative language, and the transformation of the titled and apparently solved *Enigmata* into genuine vernacular riddles.

At first sight, it might appear that the poets of *Riddles* 35 and 40 have an easier task than the other translators we have examined in previous chapters. The gap between Aldhelm’s verse and vernacular poetry is not hard to bridge, it may seem, because

Aldhelm is supposed to have been an accomplished poet in the vernacular.⁴ Moreover, his *Enigmata* belong to the same genre as Old English riddles. Latin and Old English riddles nearly always appear in batches in manuscripts, and as has been shown by Andy Orchard, they often share the same stylistic traits, such as the formulaic challenge to the audience or learned reader to reveal the solution, as for example, *gnarus poterit pandere lector* (Aldhelm's *Enigma* 81, line 10); *pandite sophi* (Tatwine's *Enigma* 40, line 5) in Latin Riddles, and *saga hwæt ic hatte* or *frige hwæt ic hatte* in the Old English.⁵

But while similarities in style and genre make Aldhelm's *Enigmata* easier to translate than poems such as the *Carmen de aue phoenice*, which required adaptation to the heroic tradition, they nevertheless raise difficulties of context and allusion. Aldhelm's *Enigmata* are written in a classical style, filled not only with quotations from classical poets, but with the names of characters from pagan mythology.⁶ And as opposed to *De die iudicii*, where the few classical references are set in the transparently Christian scene of Doomsday, Aldhelm's *Enigmata* do not *individually* look like Christian poems.

Of course, the Christian nature of the *Enigmata* is entirely clear from their title: an *enigma* is both a genre and a trope, a species of allegory, which stems ultimately from biblical *enigmata*, dark sayings that conceal wisdom or truth (Proverbs 1.6). Through their allusive language, the *Enigmata* reflect St Paul's phrase, *per speculum in enigmate* ('through a glass darkly,' I Corinthians 13.12), the assertion that spiritual understanding in this world is obscured.⁷ Moreover, in the poetic preface to the *Enigmata*, Aldhelm clarifies that these poems are Christian, celebrations of divine and poetic creation. In a grand rhetorical flourish, he rejects the 'Castalian nymphs' (*castalidas nimphas*, line 10), refuses to traverse 'summits of Apollo' (*Cynthi ... cacumina*, line 12), and declines to prostrate himself on the slopes of Parnassus; instead, he proclaims his muse and his inspiration to be the Christian God.⁸ Moreover, in *De metris*, which like the *Enigmata* is part of the *Epistola ad Acircium* (a composite work addressed to Acircius, probably Aldfrith, King of Northumbria, 685–705), Aldhelm adds that the chief rhetorical device of the *Enigmata*, prosopopoeia, originates from the Bible.⁹ So classical figures in Aldhelm's verse

are mainly ornaments of elegant Latin poetic diction whose Christian meaning must be scrutinized. (As Aldhelm remarks in his letter to Leuthere: ‘so many hidden matters of subjects cannot be accurately understood, except after applying frequent and extended concentration.’)¹⁰ But we know all this because Aldhelm tells us so in his prefaces, not within the *Enigmata* themselves.

The vernacular translator, however, has no such recourse to any preface that states that classical references are not to be taken literally, and he is not translating the whole collection, but just one isolated poem. His challenge, therefore, is how to adapt the classical references, and to suggest a Christian meaning within the poem itself. The lack of explanatory context is aggravated by vernacular poems’ lack of titles. Aldhelm’s *Enigmata* usually come with their solutions as their titles, and this gives Aldhelm the poetic freedom to compose more than just a test of wits, but rather an invitation to the reader to reflect on the subject’s deeper meaning – as witnessed by Aldhelm’s prayer for divine inspiration to help him ‘reveal the hidden mysteries of things’ (*pandere rerum / enigmata ... claudistina*, preface, lines 7–8). As Old English poems do not usually bear titles, and as the Old English words for ‘riddle,’ *rædels* and *giedd*, do not bear the weight of patristic and grammatical learning, the vernacular translator faces the problem of how to make the solution clear, while also suggesting profound spiritual truths.

This chapter assesses the differing responses of the two translators to the challenges posed by the two *Enigmata*. (*Riddles* 35 and 40 appear to be by different hands, and not by one poet-translator, as was once thought, because *The Leiden Riddle* can be dated on linguistic grounds to the eighth century, and must have been rendered into the West Saxon of the Exeter Book at some later date, whereas *Riddle* 40 was probably not translated into Old English before the tenth century.)¹¹ We shall see that the author of *Riddle* 35 (and *The Leiden Riddle*) relies mainly on aural vernacular devices to adapt the Latin, a strategy similar to other translators we have discussed. The translator of *Creatura*, on the other hand, while also drawing on vernacular techniques, does not shrink from importing Latinate patterns and references, and relies on his learned audience’s ability to recognize classical deities as merely rhetorical figures.

Lorica and Riddle 35

In *Lorica*, Aldhelm describes the strange transformation of the breast-plate from ore in the earth, to an unwoven garment:¹²

Lorica

Roscida me genuit gelido de uiscere tellus;
Non sum setigero lanarum uellere facta,
Licia nulla trahunt nec garrula fila resultant
Nec crocea seres texunt lanugine uermes
Nec radiis carpor duro nec pectine pulsor; 5
Et tamen en uestis uulgi sermone uocabor;
Spicula non uereor longis exempta faretris.

[The dewy earth produced me from its frozen inwards. I am not made from the bristling fleece of (sheep's) wool; no yarn is drawn (tight on a loom), no humming threads leap about (the spindle); nor do Chinese silkworms weave me from their yellow floss; I am not gathered from spinning-wheels, nor am I beaten by the stiff carding-comb: and yet, nevertheless, note that I am described as 'clothing' in common parlance. I have no fear of arrows drawn from long quivers.]

The poem is a model of good Anglo-Latin verse, as outlined in Aldhelm's *De metris* and in the preface to the *Enigmata*. The use of *setiger* ('bristly,' line 2) follows Aldhelm's own recommendation, in *De metris*, to employ compounds formed with *-fer* and *-ger*. (In fact *setiger* is the first such compound mentioned in the list.)¹³ As one would expect from Aldhelm's verse, the lines 'flow properly in hexametrical form' (*ritu dactilico recte decursa*, preface, line 27): they are metrically regular and endstopped, and there is no elision.¹⁴

Lorica is elegantly constructed, with sequences of leonine rhyme in the middle three lines (*trahunt ... resultant* / *... seres ... uermes* / *... carpor ... pulsor*), light touches of alliteration throughout (*genuit gelido*, line 1; *pectine pulsor*, line 5; *uestis uulgi ... uocabor*, line 6), and a golden line at the poem's centre (line 4), which appropriately places the verb *texunt* ('weave,' 'compose') at the centre of the poem.

The text has the superficial appearance of a classical composition,

as phrases such as *roscida tellus*, and *crocea lanugine* are strongly reminiscent of classical verse. There is a verbal echo of Claudian,¹⁵ and the evocation of the weaving-press perhaps recalls Vergil's description of Circe's loom,¹⁶ or Ovid's description of Arachne's loom.¹⁷ The reference to wool and weaving, in combination with a sequence of negative phrases, may suggest Vergil's description of the Parcae spinning the threads of human destiny and their prophesy of a Golden Age when vines will not be pruned and wool will not be spun.¹⁸ It is also noteworthy that there are references to the Parcae spinning the fates of men in two of Aldhelm's other *Enigmata*: in *Enigma* 45 (*Fusum*, 'Spindle') – *per me fata uirum dicunt decernere Parcas* – and in *Enigma* 89 (*Arca libraria*, 'Bookcupboard') – *dum tollunt dirae librorum lumina Parcae*.

However, despite the poem's classical veneer, a closer look reveals that it is fundamentally Christian. *Lorica* is not about the weaving of old stories, nor about the spinning of fictions. There are some biblical reminiscences,¹⁹ and the echo of Dracontius in the opening line suggests a Christian context.²⁰ What is more, the *Enigma* also echoes Aldhelm's overtly Christian compositions.²¹ *Lorica* line 5 recalls the prose *De uirginitate* as well as the *Carmen de uirginitate*.²²

That there is more to this poem than initially meets the eye is suggested by the explanatory title, which is not the colloquial word for 'garment' or 'armour,' *uestis* (punned upon in line 6),²³ but the learned word, *lorica*, surely an allusion to the Pauline imagery of spiritual armour, the 'breastplate of faith' (*lorica fidei*, I Thessalonians 5.8) and the 'breastplate of righteousness' (*lorica iustitiae*, Ephesians 6.11).²⁴ The riddling tension in this *Enigma* is thus not so much in the superficial incongruity between the garment of the loom and the breast-plate, but in the mystery of the name *lorica* itself, betokening both a breastplate, a visible garment, and an invisible garment, a Christian virtue (faith, or righteousness). The speaker of the *Enigma* seems to describe its own process of transformation, from iron ore, to a meshed garment, to the invisible garment of faith that defends the wearer against evil. Even the statement in the last line that this garment protects against 'arrows drawn from long quivers' (*spicula ... longis exempta faretris*, line 7) recalls Paul's imagery of spiritual armour that defends against 'all the fiery darts of the wicked' (*omnia tela*

nequissimi ignea, Ephesians 6.16).

Let us then see how the Old English poet responds to this subtle evocation of the Pauline image of ‘the breastplate of faith,’ and how he suggests both the solution and the deeper Christian meaning in a titleless vernacular riddle. Below are two versions of the same translation, the Northumbrian *Leiden Riddle*, and the later West Saxon version:

THE LEIDEN RIDDLE

Mec se ueta uong uundrum freorig
ob his innaðae aerest cæn[d]æ.
[Ni] uaat ic mec biuorthæ uullan fliusum,
herum ðerh hehcraeft, hygiðonc[ummin].
Uundnae me ni biað ueflæ, ni ic uarp hafæ,
ni ðerih ðreatun giðraec ðret me hlommith,
Ne me hrutendu hrisil scelfath,
ni mec ouana aam sceal cnyssa.
Uyrmas mec ni auefun uyrði craeftum,
ða ði geolu godueb geatum fraetuath.
Uil mec hu[e]thrae suaedeh uidæ ofaer eorðu
hatan mith hliðum hyhtlic giuæd[e];
Ni anoegun ic me aerigfaerae egsan brogum,
ðeh ði n[ume]n siæ niudlicae obcocrum.

[The wet meadow, wondrously frozen, first bore me from its womb. In my thoughts I know that I am not wrought through outstanding craftsmanship with fleeces of wool, nor with hairs. I have no twisted weft, nor do I have a warp, nor through the oppression of violence does thread thrum in me, nor do humming shuttles shake me, nor does the slay have to strike me from all sides. Silk-worms do not weave me with the skill of fate, such as decorate fine yellow cloth with ornaments. But nevertheless all over the earth I will be called a hopeful garment among men. Neither do I fear the flight of arrows with the terrors of peril, although it be grasped eagerly from quivers.]

Mec se wæta wong, wundrum freorig,
 of his innape ærist cende.
 Ne wat ic mec beworhtne wulle flysum,
 hærum þurh heahcræft, hygeþoncum min.
 Wundene me ne beoð wefle, ne ic
 wearp hafu, 5
 ne þurh þreata geþræcu þræd me ne himmeð,
 ne æt me hrutende hrisil scribeð,
 ne mec ohwonan sceal am cnyssan.
 Wyrmas mec ne awæfan wyrda cræftum,
 þa þe geolo godwebb geatwum frætwað. 10
 Wile mec mon hwæpre sepeah wide ofer eorþan
 hatan for hæleþum hyhtlic gewæde.
 Saga soðcwidum, searoþoncum gleaw,
 wordum wisfæst, hwæt þis gewædesy.

[The wet meadow, wondrously frozen, first bore me from its womb. In my thoughts I know that I am not wrought through outstanding craftsmanship with fleeces of wool, nor with hairs. I have no twisted weft, nor do I have a warp, nor through the oppression of violence does thread thrum in me, nor does the humming shuttle slide at me, nor does the slay have to strike me from all sides. Silkworms do not weave me with the skill of fates, such as decorate fine yellow cloth with ornaments. But nevertheless people all over the earth will call me a hopeful garment for men. Say in true speech, man discerning in cunning thoughts, wise in words, what this garment is.]

In addition to dialectal differences between the two versions, there are also differences in diction.²⁵ The West Saxon version alters the correct plural translation of *radiis* to the singular, and has substituted *scribeð* with *scelfath*. The Exeter Book riddle avoids the give-away feminine inflection on the participle *biuorhtæ* (*The Leiden Riddle*, line 3a), which might allude to the feminine nouns *gewæde* ('garment'), or even the solution, *byrne* ('mailcoat'), and instead simply has *beworhtne*.²⁶ There are other slight changes in number and word order in the West Saxon version (*hrutende*, *wyrda*, *sceal am*). The most striking difference between the two versions, however, is the omission of the last line of *Lorica* from

the Exeter riddle, perhaps to preserve a measure of riddling obliquity. Instead, the poet adds the oral challenge to the listener, a ‘man wise in words’ (*searopuncum gleaw*), a formula that echoes the insular riddle tradition in two ways. First, the challenge to a wise reader echoes Aldhelm’s command to a *sapiens* in *Enigma* 18, and his reference to a *gnarus ... lector* (‘learned reader’) in *Enigma* 81, and the address to the reader and *inflatos ... sofos* (‘puffed-up wise men’) at the end of the whole collection. It also recalls the vernacular address to the *þoncol man* (*Riddle* 2, line 12b), the *wis worda gleaw* (‘the discerning man wise in words,’ *Riddle* 32, line 14a), the *wisfæstum menn* (‘the wise man,’ *Riddle* 28, line 13a) and the *wisum woðboran* (‘the wise poet,’ *Riddle* 31, line 24a). Second, the formulaic challenge to guess what this garment is (*saga ... hwæt þis gewæde sy*) echoes the ‘say what I am called’ command in the Exeter Book *Riddles*, seventeen of which close with an address to an audience that is modelled on the formula *saga hwæt ic hatte* (‘say what I am called’) or *frige hwæt ic hatte* (‘find out what I am called’).²⁷ The Exeter Book translator therefore goes to greater lengths to adapt *Lorica* into a vernacular setting.

In general, however, the two Old English versions follow the Latin *Lorica* very closely. One line of Latin is generally translated with two alliterative English lines, except that some lines are reshuffled, and words are added to supply alliteration.²⁸ Moreover, the scribe of *The Leiden Riddle* seems to have intended to present this method of translation visually, for he has attempted to lay out each pair of alliterative lines as one line in the Leiden manuscript, and each pair is headed with an enlarged initial letter, perhaps so that the English resembles the end-stopped lines of the Latin source.²⁹

As was mentioned above, *Lorica*’s theme easily fits into the conventions of vernacular poetry. The ‘coat of mail’ or ‘breastplate’ is not in any way foreign to Old English; mailcoats feature often in the poetic tradition, as testified by the number of English words (and compounds) for mailcoat: *byrne* (*isernbyrne*, *heoðobyrne*, *herebyrne*, *guðbyrne*), *hrægl* (*beadohrægl*, *fyrðhrægl*), *serc* (*licsyrce*, *leoðosyrce*), *hring* (*hringnet*, *hringiren*), *net* (*breostnet*, *searonet*). Moreover, since certain other Exeter Book riddles are set in a heroic context (such as the shield of *Riddle* 5, the sword of *Riddle* 20, the bow of *Riddle* 23), the riddle of the breastplate fits happily within that sub-group.³⁰ It also slots into another sub-group within

the Exeter Book collection, namely the loom riddles, such as *Riddle* 70 ('Shuttle'), and *Riddle* 56 ('Web in the loom'), where weaving is presented as a battle.³¹

The main challenges for the translator, therefore, are not the adaptation of the subject-matter to the tradition of heroic poetry, but the intimation of the solution within the titleless poem itself and the suggestion that the mailcoat is figurative, the spiritual armour that defends the wearer against evil. Let us now consider in detail how the Old English poet sets about responding to these challenges.

One strategy the translator adopts is to make this breastplate sound like other magically protective mailshirts in vernacular verse, such as the mailcoat that protects Beowulf in his fights with Breca (*Beowulf*, lines 550–553a) and with Grendel's mother: *þæt gebearh feore, / wið ord ond wið ecge ingang forstod* ('it saved his life, and withstood penetration against sword-point and edge,' lines 1548b–1549). But by saying that the mailcoat is *not* woven 'through the skill of fates' (*wyrda cræftum*, line 9b), the poet is hinting that the garment is not endowed with the pagan supernatural power of the Parcae or the Norns, the goddesses who weave the fates of mankind.

The main response of our translator, however, is to use vernacular devices in order to bring out the riddling paradox and to suggest the breastplate's figurative nature. The poet has shifted the personal pronoun *mec* ('me') to a strong position at the poem's opening, thus highlighting the device of prosopopoeia (the convention that an inanimate subject speaks in the first person, which Aldhelm discusses in his *De metris*, and argues is ultimately a biblical device).³² The front-shifting identifies the translation with the native riddling tradition, as more than half (fifty-four) of the ninety-five Exeter Book *Riddles* begin with a personal pronoun (*ic*, *mec*, *min*). The prosopopoeia is also highlighted by the repetition on 'thought,' *hygeþoncum ... searoponcum*, stressing the breastplate's sentience.

In the absence of a title, the Old English poet needs to highlight the paradox of an unwoven garment more clearly than the Latin source.

One of his strategies is the repetition on 'weaving,' *wefle ... awæfan*

... *godwebb*, which brings out the analogy of weaving more clearly. The poem is also patterned by ornamental alliteration, including alliteration on **h** (*hærum ... heahcræft, hygeþoncum / ... hafu / hlimmeð*), on **þ** (*þurh þreata geþræcu þræd*) and on **w** (*wyrmas ... awæfan ... wyrda / godwebb / wile ... wide / gewæde*), which evokes the racket of the loom. (Such aural poetic devices also help to cover up the unpoetic nature of the diction, such as *wefl, wearp, þræd, hrisil, am.*) Word-play underlines the central antithesis of the riddle, namely, the hidden likeness between weaving and warfare, as for instance in the phrase *þurh þreata geþræcu* (apparently a translation of *licea ... trahunt*, 'leashes ... draw tight'), a phrase which has provoked some debate.³³ Of course, it is possible that *þreat* is simply a scribal misspelling through metathesis on *þræd* ('thread'), and thus an accurate translation of *licium* ('thread,' 'leash'). But it would be highly unusual to have *þræd* twice (as a simplex) in one alliterative line. As it stands, the manuscript reading *þurh þreata geþræcu* evokes the violence of the loom and of battle. *þreat* can have the sense of 'crowd,' 'throng,' 'force,' or 'violence,' and in particular, the word can carry the specifically military meaning of a 'phalanx,' or a 'cohort,' or even perhaps 'troops.'³⁴ *Geþræcu* means 'press, crowd, crush, tumult,' but the word can also have a military sense.³⁵ The phrase *þurh þreata geþræcu* might thus suggest the figurative sense of battle ('through the press of troops'), as well as the action of the slay beating up the fabric ('through the press of violence').

Other instances of word-play help to suggest the solution, by encapsulating the paradox of a loom that sounds like a battle, and a garment that is unwoven. *Hlimman* (line 6) means 'thrum,' but also 'clash';³⁶ *scriðan* (line 7) means 'glide,' but can also presage violent action;³⁷ *cnyssan* (line 8) means 'knock,' and 'oppress in battle.'³⁸ Other puns suggest a military subtext. *Hæleþ* (line 12a) can mean 'man,' and also 'warrior'; *geatwe* can mean 'ornaments' as well as 'armour,' and *frætwan* can mean 'to adorn' and 'to arm.' Even the challenge in the Exeter Book *Riddle* to a man *searoponcum gleaw* contains a revealing ambiguity, for the phrase can mean 'wise in artful thoughts,' and also 'wise with thoughts of armour.'³⁹ By punning on *searo* ('armour,' 'cunning,' or 'skill') the poet plays on the traditional association of mailcoats with skill. This pun is particularly apt for Old English verse, for in the vernacular tradition, armour and skill are closely associated. We

know, for instance, that Beowulf's *searonet* ('armour-net,' 'mail-coat') was 'sewn by the skill of the smith' (*seowed smibes orþancum*, line 406a). Elsewhere, Beowulf's mailcoat is described as *sid ond searofah* ('broad and skilfully decorated,' line 1444a).

Word-play also hints at the deeper meaning of the riddle. *Godwebb* ('good cloth,' line 10a) may also be read as 'garment of God,' through the familiar play on the different vowel length of *goæd* ('good') and *goǣd* ('God'), and thus may allude to the Pauline imagery of the armour of faith.⁴⁰ The poet also seems to be punning on the secular and spiritual meaning of the phrase *hyhtlic gewæde* (line 12), which could either mean a 'joyful garment,' or more significantly 'a hopeful garment.' What is more, the Christian reading of *hyhtlic gewæde* is supported by the description of the Bible in *Riddle 92*, as a *hyhtlic hildewæpen* ('hopeful battle-weapon,' line 5a). This word-play would confirm the suspicion that an unwoven breastplate must be a figurative one.

The translator's expansion of the repeated negatives in the source (*non ... nec ... nec ... nec*) into eight repeated negatives in the Old English may serve two purposes. First, it may recall the inexpressibility topos, and thus evoke thoughts of heaven or hell, and hint that this breastplate is not earthly but spiritual. In addition, given that in the Old English poetic tradition mailcoats are formulaically described as *broden* ('woven'), *seowed* ('sewn'), or *locen* ('intertwined,' 'locked'), the translator's expansion of the negative statements is significant, since it emphasises that this breastplate is *not* woven, and thus intimates again its figurative nature.⁴¹

So ultimately, the riddle-solver, the one 'wise in artful thoughts' (*searorþoncum gleaw*), has to pick apart the word-play and scrutinize poetic patterns, in order to glimpse spiritual truth. Only then, when he has learnt to think figuratively, will he have 'unlocked with the power of a key the fastening of the treasure-chamber door' (*þæs hordgates / cægan cræfte þa clamme onleac*, *Riddle 42*, lines 11b–12).

Creatura and Riddle 40

Riddle 40 is the only other vernacular riddle that translates a poem by Aldhelm, *Enigma 100*, which is entitled *Creatura*. The idea

underlying the *Enigmata*, Paul's observation that invisible truths must be known 'by the creation of the world, through the things that are made' (*a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt*, Romans 1.20), is here developed into a poem on the subject of Creation, through reference to Vergil, Ovid, and Horace, as well as to Arator, Sedulius, and Venantius Fortunatus.⁴²

The poem, an exercise in prosopopoeia, encompasses the art of the preceding *Enigmata*, for it contains a seemingly never-ending succession of mostly two-line paradoxes.⁴³ Each assertion is a hyperbole which hinges on a comparative adjective, as if to show that *Creatura* embraces the multitude of the world's riddles.⁴⁴ At the heart of the *Enigma* is antithesis, one of the most natural of rhetorical devices, and thus the least worrying from a Christian point of view. Augustine remarked that 'just as the opposition of contraries bestows beauty upon language, then, so is the beauty of this world enhanced by the opposition of contraries, composed, as it were, by an eloquence not of words, but of things.'⁴⁵ The cumulative effect of the antitheses suggests that 'Creation' is an oxymoron of infinite possibility.

The Old English *Riddle* 40 generally follows the usual method of translating Latin verse, by rendering one Latin hexameter with two Old English alliterative lines. At some 107 lines, *Riddle* 40 is the longest vernacular riddle, even though its end is missing, owing to the loss of a folio in the Exeter Book between folios 111 and 112. *Riddle* 40 is a much later composition than *The Leiden Riddle* and *Riddle* 35. The poem has been dated to the mid-tenth century, as it is based on the source manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson C. 697, a ninth-century manuscript which must have been in England by the second quarter of the tenth century, and appears to have connections with the abbey of St Augustine's, Canterbury.⁴⁶ Rawlinson C. 697 bears corrections in a hand similar to that of a book of Old English glosses which originated in the same monastery, the *Cleopatra Glossary*, and the corrections agree with variant readings of two eleventh-century manuscripts, one of which (Cambridge University Library Gg. 5. 35) was used in a learning environment and was copied at St Augustine's.⁴⁷ It is thus tempting to speculate that *Riddle* 40 was composed at tenth-century Canterbury, whence several manuscripts of the *Enigmata* derive,⁴⁸ and where the *Enigmata* were no doubt studied, as

evidenced by glosses in three Anglo-Saxon manuscripts of that period.⁴⁹ *Creatura* seems to have been the object of particular study, to judge by the numerous glosses on the poem in two Canterbury manuscripts, namely Cambridge, Gg. 5. 35, and British Library, Royal 12. C. XXIII.⁵⁰

In many senses, the translator of the heavily glossed *Creatura* faces an easier task than the other translators we have considered so far, including even the translator of *Lorica*.⁵¹ The poet of *Riddle 40* does not need to suggest the solution within the poem, since 'Creation' is obvious from the content of the poem itself.⁵² Nor does he have to go to great lengths to intimate the deeper Christian meaning, which is implicit in a poem about Creation. He only needs to make a few subtle suggestions. For example, he elaborates on Aldhelm's comment that nothing can overcome *Creatura, ni Deus* ('except God,' line 12), by turning it into *se ana god* ('the one God'). The point is emphasized by the line's alliteration on *ænig ofer eorþan ... ana*. He also adds subtle Christian undertones when he changes Aldhelm's description of *Creatura* as 'sweeter than the taste of smooth nectar' (*dulcior ... quam lenti nectaris haustus*, line 31) to 'sweeter than the honeycomb, blended with honey' (*swetra / þonne þu beobread blende mid hunige*, lines 58–9). This alteration has a biblical resonance, as it recalls a verse from psalm 118 of the *Paris Psalter*, where the word of God is said to be 'much better and sweeter than honey and the honey comb' (*hunige mycle / and beobread betere and swetre*).⁵³ The translator may also have had in mind Aldhelm's own adaptation of this image in the *Carmen de uirginitate*, where sacred texts are claimed 'to surpass in sweetness the delightful taste of honey and of yellow honey-combs' (*quae superant mellis mulsum dulcedine gustum / flauentisque flauis*, *Carmen de uirginitate*, lines 2771–2).⁵⁴

Even in his use of rhetorical devices, the poet of *Riddle 40* does not need to depart significantly from his source, because Aldhelm (himself a celebrated vernacular poet) often makes use of aural devices from the vernacular tradition. The translator's main challenge is rather to render into Old English the *recherché* vocabulary used by Aldhelm, including classical references such as Tonans, Vulcan, and Zephyrus. As we shall see, what sets the poet of *Riddle 40* apart from others we have examined is his confidence in borrowing classical references. As opposed to the author of *The*

Phoenix, for example, this poet does not expunge the pagan references, but adapts or even simply imports them without alteration. In doing so, he relies on aural devices to help assimilate the Latinate figures, but he also takes a risk that none of the previous translators we have examined was prepared to take: he relies on the learning of his audience.

As was mentioned above, the translator of *Riddle 40* does not face great difficulties when setting out to adapt Aldhelm's rhetorical devices in *Creatura*. The smoothness of the adaptation can be seen most clearly at the opening of the two poems.

Conditor, aeternis fulcit qui saecula columnis,
Rector regnorum, frenans et fulmina lege,
Pendula dum patuli uertuntur culmina caeli,
Me uarium fecit, primo dum conderet orbem.

[The Creator, who supports the world on eternal columns, the Ruler of (all) kingdoms, restraining lightning-bolts with (His) law while the suspended summits of the wide skies revolve, made me in all my variety when He first created the world.]

Ece is se scyppend, se þas eorþan nu
wreðstupum wealdeð ond þas world healdeð.
Rice is se reccend ond on ryht cyning
ealra anwalda, eorþan ond heofones, healdeð ond wealdeð, swa
he ymb þas utan hweorfeð.

[Eternal is the Creator, who now controls the columns of the earth and holds this world. Powerful is the Ruler, and rightly King, Governor of all things, of heaven and earth; he holds and controls, even as he turns this around from outside.]

The opening of *Creatura* differs from other *Enigmata*, which customarily begin in the first person, since here the personal voice of the speaker does not emerge until line 4 (*me uarium fecit*, 'he made me in all my variety'). The opening thus sounds more like the beginnings of Christian Latin poems, such as Paulinus of Nola's *Carmen VI: summe pater rerum caelique aeterna potestas* ('highest father of creation and eternal power of heaven').⁵⁵ More directly, the opening may be designed to mirror the preface to the *Enigmata*, which opens with a five-line apostrophe to God, and

thus prove a pleasing closure to the collection.

The Old English poet follows the source closely, and does not opt for a traditional beginning introduced by a first-person pronoun. His opening thus sounds more like religious verse, and in fact, the word for God, *scyppend* ('Creator'), which occurs nowhere else in the Exeter Book *Riddles*, recalls Cynewulfian verse and the biblical paraphrases of the Junius manuscript. The first five lines of *Riddle* 40 are also set apart in the manuscript by occupying the bottom of folio 110^a, while the reference to the speaker (*mec*, line 6), introduces the text on the next page, folio 110^b.⁵⁶

The opening of *Creatura* is rich in rhetorical patterns. Line 3 is a golden line – the splitting up of associated nouns and adjectives by a medial verb – which literally depicts the description of God's movement of the skies. Aldhelm also employs a number of aural effects in the opening hexameters, such as assonance (*columnis ... culmina*), and an assonantal formula distinctive of his verse, *culmina caeli*, and the envelope pattern on *conditor ... conderet* – all of which are traditional vernacular devices.⁵⁷

Such aural effects in the source clearly facilitate the task of the translator, who accordingly decorates his rendering with assonance (*wealdeð ... world ... anwalda*), and encloses his opening passage with a more developed envelope pattern: *eorþan ... / wealdeð ... healdeð* and *eorþan ... / healdeð ond wealdeð*, which is based on a formulaic doublet (*wealdeð ... healdeð*).⁵⁸ In fact, the vernacular poet goes even further than the source, as he weaves the aural devices in the opening into the wider structure of the poem, as part of his application of the traditional generative method of composition.⁵⁹ For instance, the doublet *healdeð ond wealdeð* is recycled some fifteen lines later, in line 22, to close a section, and words from line 5, *ymb*, *utan*, and *hweorfeð*, are echoed later, as *þisne ymbhwyrft* in line 7, and as *þisne ymbhwyrft utan ymbclyppe* in line 15. Generative composition also helps to underline the meaning of the poem. The polyptoton *hweorfeð*, *ymbhwyrft*, and *hwearfte*, and repeated prepositions such as *ymb* ('around'), *utan* or *uttor* ('outside'), *ofer* ('over') either as a simplex or in a compound, suggest the paradox that despite the perpetual movement of Creation, all is within the surrounding control of the Creator. The repetition of words like *æghwær* ('everywhere') was described by Tupper as redundant, but in fact, it is more than mere

padding, for it is meant to show that Creation is indeed 'everywhere.'⁶⁰

One distinctively Latinate device that has been carried across into the Old English version is polyptoton. The phrase *rector regnorum* in the source (an echo of the biblical polyptoton *rex regum*, 'King of Kings')⁶¹ has been rendered more elaborately in the Old English as *Rice is se reccend ond on ryht cyning / ealra anwalda*, with a polyptoton on *rice* ('powerful') and *reccend* ('ruler'). The poet adapts this device by making *rice is se reccend* echo the sound and rhythm of the opening half-line, *ece is se scyppend*, and by making the whole alliterative line sound almost formulaic. In *Daniel*, for instance, God is described as *reccend and rice* (line 583a), and in *Christ I*, God is hailed as *Eala þu reccend ond þu riht cyning* (line 18).

The adaptation of rhetorical devices, therefore, does not pose great difficulty for this poet. A greater challenge is the adaptation of Aldhelm's unusual Latin diction, and his 'pagan' figurative language. We get a first taste of the translator's somewhat unusual response to this challenge – his readiness to be Latinate – in his rendering of lines 15–16, with their description of the fragrance of Creation: *possum ... uincere spirantis nardi dulcedine plena* ('I can surpass ... through the full sweetness of the redolent nard'). The translator does not replace the Latin word *nard* with a more familiar English word (perhaps because he has already employed every vernacular word for 'fragrance'), but simply carries it into his translation: *swylce ic nardes stenc nyde oferswiþe mid minre swetnesse symle æghwær* ('likewise I always necessarily surpass the scent of nard with my sweetness everywhere'). The unusual word *nard*, which appears nowhere else in Old English poetry,⁶² is adapted through assonance on *nardes ... nyde* (line 29), and through generative repetition – *stenc* recalls *stence* (line 23), and *oferswiþe* recalls *oferswiþan* (line 20a).

The readiness to import exotic references directly into the translation is also evident in the rendering of the phrase *plus pernix aquilis* ('swifter than eagles,' line 35). Clearly, the poet has misunderstood the adjective, *pernix* ('swift'), as a kind of bird, for he says 'I can fly quicker than the pernex, or the eagle, or the hawk can ever fly' (*ic mæg fromlicor fleogan þonne pernex / opþe earn opþe hafoc æfre meahte*, lines 66–7). Presumably, he muddled

pernix with the Latin for ‘partridge,’ *perdix*, a word whose exact reference does not seem to have been understood in Anglo-Saxon England, for it is glossed only as *avis quaedam* (‘a certain bird’) in the eighth-century *Corpus Glossary* (which preserves interpretations ultimately derived from the school of Theodore and Hadrian at Canterbury).⁶³ Regardless of his misunderstanding, however, it is noteworthy that the poet does not try to translate this strange Latin word, or replace it with a familiar name of a bird, but simply adopts ‘*pernix*’ in his translation.

The most striking aspect of this poet’s willingness to borrow Latin vocabulary is his response to Aldhelm’s use of pagan characters of classical mythology. Of course, as Aldhelm emphasizes in his preface to the *Enigmata*, his ‘pagan’ references are in fact nothing more than metonymic ciphers, which merely serve to inscribe the poem within the culture of classical learning, and add literary prestige to the verse. Ultimately, they are just rhetorical devices that serve to adorn the Christian message. In this explicit Christian context, it is also significant that many of Aldhelm’s pagan references appear only to be marked as inferior to *Creatura*. We are told, for instance, that *Creatura* is swifter than Zephyrus, and burns hotter than the fires of Vulcan.

We have seen that other translators usually expunge pagan gods and characters. This poet is less wary. In some cases, he paraphrases classical references ambiguously, as in his rendering of the following antithesis:

Altior, en, caelo rimor secreta **Tonantis**
Et tamen inferior terris tetra **Tartara** cerno (lines 21–2)

[See, I am higher than the sky and can examine God’s secrets; and nevertheless, being more lowly than the earth, I gaze into foul hell.]

In the Old English, the reference to Jupiter – *Tonans* (‘the Thunderer’) – and Tartarus, the infernal regions of classical mythology, are paraphrased ambiguously:

hyrre ic eom heofone; hateþ mec **heahcýning**
his deogol þing dyre bihealdan;

eac ic under eorþan eal sceawige
wom **wraðscrafu wraþra gesta.**
41)

(lines 38–

[I am higher than heaven; the High King commands me to gaze on his precious secret; I also wholly scrutinize under the earth the iniquitous terrible pits of angry spirits.]

Tonans has become *heahcyning*, ‘High King,’ which could refer equally to Jupiter or the Christian God, who in Old English verse is often referred to through the formula, *heofona heahcyning* or *heofones heahcyning* (‘high king of heaven’).⁶⁴ The reference to Tartarus, the infernal regions of classical mythology, is also paraphrased ambiguously. The rendering, *wom wraðscrafu wraþra gesta* (‘the iniquitous grievous pits of evil spirits,’ line 41), could refer equally to Tartarus or to hell. Rhetorical devices are cleverly used both to hint at the Christian meaning (the Christian formula *heofona heahcyning* is highlighted through the line’s alliteration, *hyrre ic eom heofone, hateþ mec heahcyning*), and to weave the references into the fabric of the poem (for example in the assonance on *hyrre ... heahcyning, wraðscrafu wraþra*). The use of such devices is perhaps inspired by the alliteration and assonance in the source itself: *Tonantis / ... tamen ... terris tetra Tartara*.

Another example of a paraphrase can be seen in the translation of Aldhelm’s reference to the Cyclopes:

Mando dapes mordax lurconum more **Ciclopum**
Cum possim iugiter sine uictu uiuere felix
33–4)

(lines

[I ravenously gulp down meals after the manner of gluttonous Cyclopes, although I can equally well live content without food.]

In the Old English, the reference to the Cyclopes, the one-eyed man-eating giants of Homeric myth, is turned into *ealdum þyrse*:

Ic mesan mæg meahtelicor
ond efnetan **ealdum þyrse**;
ond ic gesælig mæg symle lifgan

peah ic ætes ne sy æfre to feore. (lines 62–5)

[I can devour more mightily and equal the ancient giant;
and I can always live contented, even though I may not eat
for all eternity.]

The poet has made one significant change: the (plural) Cyclopes have been rendered in the singular, *ealdum þyrse*. As Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe has suggested, the poet may have been following the gloss (in the singular) in the source manuscript of *Riddle* 40, Rawlinson C. 697, *immensum gigantem* ('a huge giant').⁶⁵ If this hypothesis is correct, then the replacement of 'huge' by 'old' may be an attempt to hint at the fictitious nature of these creatures, for in Anglo-Saxon literature, the term *eald* can evoke 'false' and 'untrue,' as, for example, in King Alfred's version of the Titans' rebellion against Jove, which is prefaced by the warning that the story belongs to 'ancient lying tales' (*ealdum leasum spellum*).⁶⁶

The most important point to note about the translation of Cyclopes as a *þyrs* ('giant,' 'enchanter,' or 'demon') is that it suggests the poet's learning and his reliance on glosses. The interpretation of Cyclopes as a giant may ultimately rely on Isidore's classification of the Cyclopes in the race of giants.⁶⁷ However, there are various other words for giants that the poet could have used, such as *entas* (who like the Cyclopes were also builders of stone walls)⁶⁸ or *gigantas* (which would recall the giants in Genesis 6, the 'sons of God and the daughters' of men').⁶⁹ *Þyrs* only occurs twice in Old English poetry (once to describe Grendel, *Beowulf*, line 426a, and once in *Maxims II*, where it is stated that *þyrs sceal on fenne gewunian / ana innan lande* 'a giant must dwell in a fen, alone within the land,' lines 42b–43). But while rare in verse, *þyrs* often occurs in glosses of classical creatures, especially on Aldhelm's writings: Cacus, the three-headed giant son of Vulcan slain by Hercules;⁷⁰ Orcus, the god of the underworld (Pluto);⁷¹ the Colossus at Rhodes from Aldhelm's prose *De uirginitate*, in MS Brussels, Royal Library, 1650.⁷² *Þyrs* is also used to gloss the reference to the Marsi (wizards in Latinum): *incantatorum þyrsa, wyrmgalera* ('of enchanted giants, snake-charmers').⁷³ And the word *Cyclopes* itself is glossed elsewhere in Aldhelm's compositions as (*anige*) *þyrsas* '(one-eyed) giants.'⁷⁴ In translating Cyclopes as *þyrs*, therefore, the poet opts for a learned

term, which he most likely looked up in a gloss.

The reliance on the learning of the intended audience is most striking in the adoption of two references to pagan gods, Vulcan and Zephyrus. Aldhelm claims that *Creatura* is ‘faster than the wings of Zephyrus’ (*Zephiri uelocior alis*, line 35). In the Old English, this is rendered by two alliterative lines, into which zephyrus is simply imported. The only ‘concesssion’ is to omit the reference to the wings, lest they be taken as a sign of the winged deity:

nis zefferus, se swifta wind,
þæt swa fromlice mæg feran
æghwær; (lines 68–9)

[There is no zephyr, the swift wind, that can travel
anywhere so quickly.]

Of course, Aldhelm’s prefaces make it clear that classical references are to be interpreted metonymically, and so Zephyrus, the god of the west wind, is to be understood as an elegant substitute for ‘the west wind’ itself. The Old English poet makes the metonymy explicit with a native poetic device, variation, for *zefferus* is ‘glossed’ as *se swifta wind*. Nevertheless, his willingness to import the reference at all suggests that he was writing for a highly learned audience, who could be relied upon not to take references to pagan gods literally. Educated Anglo-Saxon readers would know that in Aldhelm’s *Enigmata*, Zephyrus, Circius, Caurus, and Boreas, are simply names of winds, as can be seen from Latin–Old English glossaries. In one tenth-century gloss of the twelve Latin names of the winds, Zephyrus is interpreted as *westen wind*,⁷⁵ and in Byrhtferth’s *Enchiridion*, Zephyrus appears in a list of winds: *subsolanus eastwind*, *zephirus west* (‘Subsolanus the east wind, Zephyrus the west wind’).⁷⁶ Zephyrus is also glossed metonymically as *westernes windes* in an eleventh-century manuscript of *Creatura* itself (Cambridge University Library Gg. 5. 35), which is known to be related to the Latin manuscript used by the translator, Rawlinson C. 697.⁷⁷

Another pagan reference in *Creatura*, the fire-god Vulcan, is also imported into *Riddle* 40. Aldhelm tells us that *Creatura* is colder

than hoarfrost, and ‘burns hot in the roasting flames of Vulcan’ (*Vulcani flammis torrentibus ardens*, line 30). The vernacular poet translates this as:

ic eom **Ulcānus** up irnendan
leohtan leoman lege hatra. (lines 56–7)

[I am hotter in fire than Vulcan, the bright gleam soaring upwards]

There is no attempt to replace Vulcan with the native counterpart, Weland, the renowned lamed smith of Germanic legend.⁷⁸ Instead, the poet simply imports Vulcan unparaphrased, undeclined even, into an alliterative line. Indeed, every word in this line alliterates – so that the foreign word sounds native. Such a striking importation of a pagan term may at first sight be interpreted as a trace of some ancient fire-cult in Anglo-Saxon England. Indeed, Richard North has argued that some Old English words associated with the sea, the sky, and the earth may bear vestigial references to pagan *numina*. His claims are partly based on glosses, such as the interpretation of Jupiter in the *Cleopatra Glossary* as *þunor*, *oððe ður* (‘thunder, or Thor’), which suggests to him that the Old English *þunor* carries vestiges of a pagan numen.⁷⁹ But it seems highly unlikely that the presence of Vulcan in *Riddle 40* connotes a pagan deity, the god of fire. First, the Old English poet suggests the metonymic reading ‘fire’ through his varying of Vulcan with the added explanation, *upirnendan / leohtan leoman* (‘the bright gleam soaring upwards’). Moreover, the whole context of the poem makes it clear that the translator has understood Vulcan as a learned metonymy, just as he interpreted Zephyrus as the west wind.

Learned Anglo-Saxon authors were acquainted with the Christian metonymic interpretation of the names of classical gods, as reflected in Augustine’s comment that classical poets ‘choose to call Vulcan the fire of the world, Neptune the water of the world.’⁸⁰ In his discussion of metonymy within the section on classical rhetorical devices, Isidore talks about the use of gods’ names as substitutes for related ideas, and gives as an example *per Venerem libidinem, per Vulcanum ignem* (‘for Venus, lust; for Vulcan, fire’).⁸¹ Elsewhere, Isidore elaborates more fully on the classical

god Vulcan as an example of metonymy:⁸²

In fabrorum autem fornace gentiles Vulcanum auctorem dicunt figuraliter per Vulcanum ignem significantes, sine quo nullum metalli genus fundi extendique potest.

[However, heathens say that Vulcan is the creator in the furnace of smiths, through Vulcan signifying fire, without which no kind of metal can be poured or stretched out.]

Any educated reader of Aldhelm's verse would thus understand that the references to Vulcan in the *Enigmata* (*Enigmata* 70:2, 100:30) are metonymic, as are references to Mars, Bacchus, Phoebus, Apollo, and so on.

Anglo-Latin glosses in fact provide incontrovertible evidence of the metonymic understanding of pagan deities. For example, in the *Cleopatra Glossary* (in a part corresponding to the *De Crissanti* section of Aldhelm's *De uirginitate*), the word *ueneris* ('of Venus') is not glossed as the goddess of love, but as mere *lustes* ('of desire'), a figure of speech, proving that Aldhelm's metonymy was perfectly understood by his learned readership.⁸³ The entry for *ulcanus* in the *Cleopatra Glossary* (*fyr, oþþe fyres god, hellesmīþ* 'fire, or the god of fire, the smith of hell') also stresses the primacy of the metonymic interpretation 'fire' over the pagan interpretation 'God of fire'.⁸⁴ This part of the *Cleopatra Glossary* can be shown to gloss Aldhelm's line 1991 of *Carmen de uirginitate*. (We can be sure of this, because *ulcanus* is placed between sections headed with the names of the virgins, *Thecla* and *Eulalia*, in a sequence of virgins' names that appears in exactly that order in *Carmen de uirginitate*.) And indeed, in the *Carmen de uirginitate*, Vulcan is employed metonymically to denote the fire from which the virgin Thecla is miraculously protected. It is clear, therefore, that the *Cleopatra Glossary* interprets pagan gods primarily as metonymies, mere flourishes of speech.

The interpretation of the *Cleopatra Glossary* is significant, since I have argued above that this translator's method of adaptation clearly places him in a learned, Latinate milieu (perhaps a scriptorium at Canterbury). It is tempting, therefore, to speculate that he had access to a book of glosses such as the *Cleopatra*

Glossary as an aid in translation, for as mentioned above, the Latin source manuscript of *Riddle 40* (Rawlinson C. 697) bears corrections in a hand similar to the *Cleopatra Glossary*, and both originated from the same abbey, St Augustine's, Canterbury.⁸⁵

We have seen in this chapter two different responses to learned Latinate *Enigmata* by Aldhelm. The poet of *Riddle 35*, while undoubtedly learned himself, and thus easily capable of translating Aldhelm, made a great effort to adapt the poem to vernacular tradition. (Indeed, he omits esoteric references, for example, to Chinese silk-worms, in order to make the rendering sound familiar.) He draws on vernacular tradition to turn Aldhelm's titled *Enigma* into a typical Old English 'titleless' riddle, and uses vernacular devices to make Aldhelm's veiled Christian meaning less obscure.⁸⁶ The poet of *Riddle 40*, however, is more open to classical allusions. This attitude can be explained both by the more obvious Christian nature of his source, and by the learned milieu to which he belongs, and for whom he seems to be writing.

CHAPTER SIX

The Verse and Virtuosity of Cynewulf

The previous chapters have each discussed the method of close poetic translation in an anonymous vernacular rendering of a Latin poem. In this final chapter, a different type of adaptation will be considered: a more mature (even if not necessarily later) stage in the process of the absorption and integration of Latin rhetoric into the Old English poetic tradition. I will examine some rhetorical patterns in Cynewulf's poems, primarily in *Elene*, *Christ II*, and *Juliana*, which are not close translations of any one Latin poem, but rely loosely on Latin prose sources.¹

Cynewulf is one of the few named Old English poets whose works have survived, and if we also count him as the author of *Guthlac B*, which lacks an ending, he is responsible for at least a tenth of the surviving poetic corpus.² In style and significance he surpasses the handful of other known poets whose vernacular verse has survived – Cædmon, Bede, Deor – and can even rival the nameless *Beowulf*-poet. Indeed, his verse apparently inspired a cult of so-called Cynewulfian poems by later imitators, like the *Phoenix* and *Andreas*, as Andy Orchard has shown.³ So understanding Cynewulf's poetic style is no side-issue, but an important means for assessing the development of the Old English poetic tradition.

The poems of Cynewulf provide a fitting conclusion for our investigation into the influence of Latin rhetoric on Old English poetry. They represent a more developed stage in the art of importation and adaptation, for Cynewulf does not just imitate Latin devices from a direct source, but has absorbed them from his wider reading, and integrated them into his own repertoire and vernacular style. Cynewulf's poetry can thus be seen as the successful culmination of the process of assimilation and blending of Latin learning with the Old English tradition, at the pen of an inspired poet. By taking the best of both cultures, and combining them into a sophisticated poetic idiom, Cynewulf created a

distinctive style, which defies many of the simple taxonomies imposed on Anglo-Saxon poetry. For while still firmly rooted in the native tradition, Cynewulf's poetry is highly Latinate in subject matter; while conforming to the conventions of formulaic alliterative style, it is highly learned and literary;⁴ while relying on the familiar stock of aural vernacular rhetorical devices, it nevertheless uses them in artistically innovative ways; and while adhering to the style of an anonymous oral *scop*, it nevertheless teases the eye with the scattered arrangement of a runic signature in a manner comparable to a Latin signatory acrostic.⁵

In this chapter, I will try to move beyond a mere cataloguing of the figures in Cynewulf's verse, which have been the subject of various studies, and try to discover how Cynewulf's particular blend of rhetorical devices accounts for his individual poetic style.⁶ I will show how Latinate devices culled from his wider reading are clustered in a distinctive way together with native devices in a show of aural virtuosity. Like the Christian Latin poets, Cynewulf's song is apostolic in its zeal, and relies consciously on figures in order to teach spiritual understanding.

Cynewulf's crossing of stylistic boundaries and his mastery of rhetorical devices are already evident at the opening of some of his poems. While *Juliana* and *Fates of the Apostles* begin in the traditional formulaic manner,⁷ the openings of *Christ II* and *Elene* are more Latinate in style. Yet I will argue that Cynewulf relies on ingenious means, and above all on word-play, to adapt these Latin, biblical openings to the vernacular heroic tradition. Let us consider first the opening of *Elene*, whose probable source, the account in the *Acta Sanctorum* for 4 May, is a version of the legend of the finding of the Cross. In the prose source, the story of Queen Helena's quest for the Cross begins matter-of-factly in the following way:⁸

Anno ducentesimo tricesimo tertio, post passionem Domini nostri Jesu Christi

[In the two hundred and thirty-third year after the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ]

The opening of Cynewulf's *Elene*, at least at first sight, looks almost as plain and prosaic:

Ða wæs agangen geara hwyrftum
 tu hund ond þreo geteled rimes,
 swylce þrittig eac, þingemearces,
 wintra for worulde, þæs þe wealdend God
 acenned wearð, cyninga wuldor, 5
 in middangeard þurh mennisc heo,
 soðfæstra leoht, þa wæs syxte gear
 Constantines caserdomes,
 þæt he Romwara in rice wearð ahæfen,
 hildfruma, to hereteman. 10

[When, with the turning of the years, two hundred and three winters in the world, and likewise a period of thirty more, counted in reckoning, had passed since God the Ruler, the Glory of Kings, the Light of the Righteous, was born on earth in human form, then it was the sixth year of the imperial reign of Constantine, after he, a war-leader, had been elevated to military ruler in the Roman empire.]

The poem does not open with an ear-catching *hwæt*, followed by the traditional ‘I heard’ formula of Old English poetic fiction, and the recitation of what happened in the days of old, *fyrndagum*.⁹ Unlike in heroic Old English poetry, the opening verse-paragraph is not rounded off with a ringing exclamation, or gnomic saying. Instead Cynewulf shifts the reference from heroic deeds in the shadowy Germanic past to the facts of history (which for Cynewulf begins with the Incarnation). And the style is correspondingly plain and prosaic: there is no need for the stunts and ‘special effects’ of a traditional poetic opening.¹⁰ The complex syntax is more reminiscent of Latin prose literature, and the unassuming *þa ... þa* (‘when ... then’) construction, as well as the phrase *þa wæs agangen*, which recalls the biblical phrase *factum est* (‘and it came to pass’), are reminiscent of the opening of a factual account in an Anglo-Saxon chronicle.

Nevertheless, to hold our interest, Cynewulf manages to layer even this highly prosaic Latinate opening with traditional poetic elements, which help to compensate for its untraditional character. To start with, after the initial prosaic four lines, Cynewulf introduces a traditional formula, *wintra for worulde* (line 4a),¹¹ and thrice-repeated appellations for God, perhaps recalling the Trinity

(*wealdend God / ... cyninga wuldor, / soðfæstra leoht*). Heroic epithets – *hildfruma*, *heretema* – are here applied to the Roman Emperor Constantine. But the main device that makes the opening of *Elene* sound traditional is sound-play. It has recently been shown that word-play is a particular feature of Cynewulf's style.¹² Most often it clusters in structurally important places, such as the beginnings and ends of sections, and of course at the beginning of the whole poem. Cynewulf's sound-play is not just the stuff of light wit, but purports to reveal profound insights into spiritual 'truths.' Here, there is play on the sound-sequences *worulde ... wealdend / ... wuldor* (lines 4–5), which prepares the way for the finding of the Cross, as the phonological congruence proclaims that through the Rood the 'world,' 'Ruler' and 'glory' are indeed united.¹³ (Similar word-play is used to celebrate the Ascension in *Christ II*, lines 547–57.)

Cynewulf uses another play on words in the opening lines, to set up a link between 'born' and 'king': *acenned ... cyninga* (line 5). This paronomasia is repeated later in the poem (lines 178 and 815; *cyning ... cenned*, line 392), as if to suggest that the sound relations are not merely felicitous, but that language can prove the truth of God becoming man. Linked to this word-play is a formula *acenned wearð*, which sounds prosaic (as it recalls descriptions of Christ's Incarnation from homiletic prose) but has echoes elsewhere in Cynewulfian verse and within *Elene* itself (as we shall shortly see).¹⁴ The whole line is repeated at line 178 (*acenned wearð, cyninga wuldor*). And later on, the phrase *acenned wearð* is repeated in close proximity to another typically Cynewulfian formula, *in middangeard*, which is also found at the beginning of *Elene* (*ond þurh Marian in middangeard / acenned wearð in cildes had, / þeoden engla*, lines 774–776a).

The opening of *Guthlac B*, a poem that is thought to have been written by Cynewulf, is also patterned by paronomasia, on *acenned* ('born'), *cyning* ('King'), *cynnes* ('men'), as well as on *clænestan* ('pure'), *cneorissum* ('men'), as if the creation of Adam prefigures the Nativity of Christ:

Ðæt is wide cuð wer a cneorissum,
folcum gefræge, þætte frymþa God
þone ærestan ælda cynnes

of þære clænestan, cyning ælmihtig,
 foldan geworhte. Ða wæs fruma niwe
 ælda tudres, onstæl wynlic,
 fæger ond gefealic. Fæder wæs acenned
 Adam ærest þurh est Godes
 on neorxnawong
 819–827a)

(*Guthlac B*, lines

[It is widely known among the races of men and heard among the nations that the God of created things, the almighty King, made the first of the race of men out of the purest earth. At that time there was a new creation, that of the human stock, a happy order, fair and pleasing. Adam the father was first brought forth, through the grace of God, into paradise ...]

Likewise, the beginning of *Christ II*, which is also untraditional and Latinate (with its apostrophe to a famous man, presumably a single reader),¹⁵ and which also alludes to the Incarnation, is marked by similar ‘opening’ formulas, *acenned wearð* and *in middangeard*. Here, there is paronomasia on *acenned* (‘was born’), and *clænne* (‘pure’) highlighting the Incarnation of Christ through a virgin. The later instance of *acenned* (line 13) draws our attention to the line, and its alliterative association of *middangeard* (‘earth’) with *meotud* (‘Creator,’ ‘Measurer’), which highlights the miracle that the Measurer who created the ‘enclosure’ of the world (*middangeard*) was born and enclosed within it at the Nativity.

Nu ðu geornlice gæstgerynum, mon se mæra, modcræfte sec þurh sefan snyttro, þæt þu soð wite hu þæt geeode, þa se ælmihtiga acenned wearð þurh clænne had,	5
sipþan he Marian, mægða weolman, mærra meowlan, mundheals geceas, þæt þær in hwitum hræglum gewerede englas ne oðeowdun, þa se æþeling cwom, beorn in Betlem. Bodan wæron gearwe þa þurh hleoþorcwide hyrdum cyðdon, sægdon soðne gefean, þætte sunu wære	10

in middangeard meotudes acenned,
in Betleme.

[Now you, illustrious man, seek with the power of your mind and through the wisdom of your spirit eagerly into spiritual mysteries so that you may know the truth as to how it came about, when the Almighty was born through virginity after he had chosen the protection of the illustrious lady, Mary, the choice of maidens, that there did not appear angels in white garments when that Prince and Hero came to Bethlehem. Heralds were ready, who revealed to the shepherds then in song and announced the true joy, that the son of the Creator was born into the world in Bethlehem.]

So although the formulas *acenned wearð* and *in middangeard* are Cynewulfian innovations (perhaps involving word-play on the first syllable of the name of Cynewulf himself), and although they may sound prosaic, their repetition within and across his poems conspires to give them a traditional poetic feel, and thus helps to make the Latinate style and subject matter of the opening lines more familiar. Cynewulf manages to ‘invent’ a tradition, and does it so successfully that he inspires later imitators to copy such formulas and word-play, as can be seen in *The Phoenix*: *þurh cildes had cenned wære / in middangeard* (lines 638–640a) and in *Andreas*: *Synnige ne mihton / oncnawan þæt cynebearn, se ðe acenned wearð / to hleo ond to hroðre hæleða cynne* (lines 565b–567).

Cynewulf has a special knack for drawing on the aural affinities of words to divine learned etymologies and biblical truths. In this passage, Mary is honoured as peerless among maidens, through the hapax legomenon *weolman* (‘choice,’ ‘pick of one’s fellow-creatures’) which is worked into the verse by an anagram on *weolman ... meowlan* (lines 445–446a). The anagram is part of a particularly subtle sound-sequence of assonance and alliteration, *Marian mægða mærræ meowlan mundheals*,¹⁶ which plays on different levels with the sound and alleged meaning of Mary’s name. The sequence *mærræ meowlan*, clearly a tmesis on *Mari ... an*, suggests that *Marian* is by necessity a *mærræ meowlan*, ‘splendid [or shining] woman.’ Cynewulf is drawing here on learned exegesis, since each of the two words, *mærræ* and *meowlan*, in fact corresponds to different patristic etymologies of Mary’s name.

Jerome and Ambrose claim that Mariam, the Syriac (Aramaic) name of Mary, derives from ‘mara’ (מָרָא), ‘lady.’¹⁷ Jerome also alleges that Mary’s Hebrew name, Miriam (מִרְיָם) can be interpreted as meaning *illuminans eos* (‘lighting them’), equating (entirely spuriously) ‘Miriam’ with Hebrew *me’iram* מְאִירָם (‘lighting them’).¹⁸ The two etymologies were sometimes paired.¹⁹ Cynewulf thus invokes the full expressive power of the vernacular to ‘prove’ patristic etymologies, and to make the case that the vernacular, as much as the holy languages of the bible, has the God-given power to tap into spiritual truths.

That this word-play is by no means a coincidence can be seen from another passage, in *Elene* (1231–3), where the name *Marian* is enclosed by words denoting or punning on light and day: *scired* (playing on *scir* ‘bright’) and *dægweorðunga* ‘feast-day.’ Indeed, Samantha Zacher has found that Cynewulf draws out alleged Hebrew and Syriac etymologies elsewhere in his verse, and one striking example is a pun on the word *or*, in the line *dæges or onwoc* (‘the origin of day awoke,’ *Fates of the Apostles*, line 65b), which, swathed as it is with words denoting light (*sigel*-, *leoht*, *dæg*), seems to conflate Old English ‘origin’ (*or*) with Hebrew אֹר (‘*or*’) ‘light’ to suggest, through a description of day-break, Christ’s immanence in Creation.²⁰

Such practice may be inspired by the commentaries of Jerome, and ultimately goes back to Alexandrine exegesis, the *Onomastica* of Philo Judaeus and Origen. The method may have been mediated through Christian Latin poets, particularly Arator, who commonly plays on the meaning and associations of names to recall patristic exegesis.²¹ For example, Arator links Christ to Solomon by giving them both the epithet *pacificus*,²² thus drawing on the (true, as it happens) etymology of Solomon’s name, from the Hebrew root שָׁ-לַם ‘peace.’ He also develops his exegesis of Acts 6–7 (the martyrdom of St Stephen) through allusion to an (incorrect) Hebrew etymology of Saul *Sha’ul* as *She’ol*, ‘hell.’²³

But Cynewulf is just as much at ease with traditional vernacular word-play as with the learned patristic variety. He excels in using clusters of word-play, a ‘constellation of paronomastic elements,’ as a structural device at the beginning and opening of sections, and even for linking sections within a poem.²⁴ One such cluster is the combination of *weorðan* (‘to become’), *weorðian* (‘to honour’),

werðeod ('nation'), *wyrd* or *wurd* ('event'), *word* ('word'), *wide* ('widely,' 'abroad'), to mark beginnings of new parts of verse, or closure of old parts.²⁵ The opening of *Juliana* is proclaimed by such word-play: *wid ond weorðlic ofer werþeode*, 'wide and splendid over the nations,' line 9). Later in the poem, such word-play parallels and contrasts the devil's tormented speech (*Ic eall gebær, / wraþe wrohtas geond werþeode, / þa þe gewurdun widan feore / from fruman worulde fira cynne*, lines 507b–8) with the saint's triumphant praise of God (*He is þæs wyrðe, þæt hine werþeode / ond eal engla cynn up on roderum / hergen*, lines 643–5a). Likewise, the opening of the allegorical exegesis in *Christ II* is distinguished from the preceding narrative through such word-play (*ðæt is þæs wyrðe þætte werþeode / secgen dryhtne þonc*, lines 600–601a), as is the subsequent paraphrase of the Song of Songs 2.8 (*Bi þon Salomon song, sunu Dauibes, / giedda gearosnottor gæstgerynum, / waldend werþeoda, ond þæt word acwæð, / "Cuð þæt geweorðeð ...* lines 712–15). Paronomasia on this constellation of elements also brings the opening verse-paragraph of *Fates of the Apostles* to a close (*wide geweorðod ofer werþeoda*, line 15) and opens a later verse-paragraph (*huru, wide wearð wurd undyrne*, line 42). This type of word-play is appropriate to Cynewulf's evangelistic message, for paronomasia on *wide*, 'widely'; *weorþan*, 'become'; *weorðian*, 'honour'; *wurd*, 'event'; *werþeod*, 'nation' outlines the success of the apostles' proselytizing mission.

Other Cynewulfian clusters are used to link different parts within one poem. For example, the traditional paronomastic sequence *lif* ('life'), *lof* ('praise'), *leof* ('beloved'), *lufu* ('love'), *geleafa* ('faith'), is a familiar grouping in Old English poetry, but has also been shown to be a favourite device of Cynewulf's.²⁶ In *Christ II*, this type of paronomasia chants a polyphony of praise (*lufedun leofwendum lifes agend / ... / leofum gesiþum*, lines 471 and 473a). Cynewulf often adds to this grouping the satellite word 'light,' presumably to recall the play on 'light' and 'life' at the opening of St John's gospel.²⁷ Such clusters particularly abound around the description of the Ascension, where they gather with the word 'light' (*lofedun liffruman, leohte gefegun*, line 504; *ond þæt ne gelyfdon, þætte liffruma*, line 656; *lufu, lifes hyht, ond ealles leohtes gefea*, line 585).²⁸

Cynewulf also employs such a paronomastic refrain, including

play on *leoht* ('light') and *leahtr* ('sin'), to connect two apparently disparate passages within one poem.²⁹ In *Juliana*, the speech of the devil is linked with the speech of the saint, as if to show that Juliana is vanquishing the devil with her eloquence, and that 'life,' 'love,' 'light,' and 'faith' are sufficient to conquer sin. The repetition of word-play is clearly deliberate, as it appears in combination with echoic repetition. (The repetitions are underlined and paronomasia is emboldened.)³⁰

stepeð stronglice, staþolfæst ne mæg
fore **leahtra** **lufan** lenge gewunian
in gebedstowe. Swa ic brogan to
laðne gelæde þam þe ic **lifes** ofonn,
leohtes geleafan; (lines 374–8)

[... he marches off fiercely, as he cannot stay steadfast in the place of prayer any longer because of love of sins. In this way I bring hateful terror on the one whose life and light of faith I begrudge].

strong wiþstondan storma scurum,
leahtra gehygdum. Ge mid **lufan** sibbe,
leohte geleafan, to þam **lifgendan**
stane, stiðhydge, staþol fæstniað (lines 651–4)

[... fiercely withstand the showers of storms, the thoughts of sins. Fasten your foundation to the living rock, resolute with the peace of love and the light of faith]

Cynewulf's use of paronomasia connects his individual poetic paraphrase to tradition as a whole, for the technique (and particular clusters such as *lif*, *lof*, *leof*, *lufu*, *geleafa*) is frequently employed by vernacular poets. But Cynewulf uses word-play so often and so artfully that he can be said to have made it a distinctive feature of his poetic style. His word-play provides not only structural organization but also hermeneutic signals to the audience, telling them how to interpret the poem's allegory. And his etymological word-play shows how deeply the vernacular and Latin influences are blended in his verse. Vernacular words – *gæstgeryne* – reveal learned etymologies and allegorical mysteries.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Cynewulf's poetic style is his use of anaphora, his favourite large-scale device. Whereas the older poets tended to use gnomic sayings or incremental repetition to punctuate their verse and build up dramatic tension, Cynewulf relies on sustained patterns of anaphora. And while he is inspired by his Latin sources to write passages of anaphora, we shall see that he has entirely adopted it into his poetic idiom, and uses it freely as part of his repertoire of poetic techniques, to outline passages of spiritual significance, and to organize sophisticated trains of thought in a coherent and easily comprehensible way.

Perhaps the most striking instance of anaphora in Cynewulf's poems is a passage of sustained *sum* anaphora from *Christ II*, whose ultimate inspiration comes from St Paul's elaboration of God's gifts given to talented people, in I Corinthians 12.7–10:

unicuique autem datur manifestatio Spiritus ad utilitatem.
alii quidem per Spiritum datur sermo sapientiae, **alii** autem
sermo scientiae secundum eundem Spiritum, alteri fides in
eodem Spiritu, **alii** gratia sanitarum in uno Spiritu, **alii**
operatio uirtutum, **alii** prophetatio, **alii** discretio spirituum,
alii genera linguarum, **alii** interpretatio sermonum.

[But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for profit. For instance, to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith in the same Spirit; to another the grace of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of (divine) powers; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.]

This biblical passage inspired the direct source of Cynewulf's *Christ II*, Gregory's Homily XXIX:

‘Ascendens in altum captiuam duxit captiuitatem, dedit dona hominibus’ ... Dedit uero dona hominibus, quia, misso desuper Spiritu, **alii** sermonem sapientiae, **alii** sermonem scientiae, **alii** gratiam uirtutum, **alii** gratiam curationum, **alii** genera linguarum, **alii** interpretationem tribuit sermonum. Dedit ergo dona hominibus.

[‘Ascending on high, He led captivity captive; He gave gifts to men’ ... indeed, ‘He gave gifts to men,’ because, when the Holy Spirit was sent from above, it allotted the word of wisdom to one, to another the word of knowledge, to another the grace of virtues, to another the grace of healings, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. So He gave gifts to men.]

Gregory here combines two biblical allusions, the Corinthians passage and Psalm 67.19: *ascendisti in altum cepisti captiuitatem accepisti dona in hominibus* (‘Thou has ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou has received gifts for men’). He highlights the ‘gifts of men’ theme with other rhetorical devices, such as enclosing repetitions: *dedit dona hominibus ... dedit ergo dona hominibus*; the pairing of gifts, *sermonem ... sermonem*; *gratiam ... gratiam*; and homoeoteleuton, *sapientiae ... scientiae*; *uirtutum ... curationum*; *linguarum ... sermonum*).

In Cynewulf’s version, the repeated *alii* has been turned into a spectacular passage in which the anaphora is expanded (perhaps in recognition of St Paul’s original and more elaborate anaphora), arranged in Cynewulf’s favourite way, with the first instance in the first half line, and the later repetitions in the second half line, and combined with a variety of other rhetorical devices.³¹ (The anaphora is emboldened, and decorative interlinear alliterative effects are underlined):

Ða us geweorðade se þas world gescop, godes gæstsunu, ond us giefe sealde, uppe mid englum ece stapelas, ond eac monigfealde modes snyttru seow ond sette geond sefan monna. Sumum wordlaþe wise sendeð on his modes gemynd þurh his muþes gæst, æðele ondgiæt. Se mæg eal fela singan ond secgan þam bið snyttru cræft bifolen on ferðe. Sum mæg fingrum wel hlude fore hæleþum hearpan stirgan, gleobeam gretan. Sum mæg godcunde	660 665 670
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reccan ryhte æ. **Sum** mæg ryne tungla
 secgan, side gesceaft. **Sum** mæg searolice
 wordcwide writan. **Sumum** wiges sped
 gifeð æt guþe, þonne gargetrum
 ofer scildhreadan sceotend sendað, 675
 flacor flangeweorc. **Sum** mæg fromlice
 ofer sealtne sæ sundwudu drifan,
 hreran holmþræce. **Sum** mæg heanne beam
 stælgne gestigan. **Sum** mæg styled sweord,
 wæpen gewyrcean. **Sum** con wonga bigong, 680
 wegas widgielle. Swa se waldend us,
 godbearn on grundum, his gife bryttað.
 Nyle he ængum anum ealle gesyllan
 gæstes snyttru, þy læs him gielp sceþþe
 þurh his anes cræft ofer oþre forð. 685

[He who created this world honoured us then, God's Spirit-Son, and gave us gifts, the eternal foundations with the angels above, and also He sowed and set within the spirit of men the abundant sagacity of the mind. To one He sends, through the breath of his mouth, wise speech, fine understanding, into his mind's intellect. The power of wisdom is granted to the spirit of the man who is able to sing and say all manner of things. Someone is able to rouse the harp with his fingers and play the joy-tree most sonorously before an audience; another is able to interpret the divine law correctly; another is able tell the mystery of the stars, the vast universe; another is able to write language skilfully. To someone He gives the faculty of fighting at the fray, the flying of arrows, when the spear-troop sends shooting over the shield-phalanx. Another is able to drive the wave-wood boldly over the salty sea and stir the tumult of the ocean. Another is able to climb the steep high tree. Another is able to wield a weapon, the steeled sword. Another knows the expanse of lands and the far-flung ways. Thus the Ruler, the God-Son, dispenses His gifts to us on the earth. He does not desire to give to any one man full spiritual understanding, lest pride in his own power, over and above another's, should harm him.]

Cynewulf combines the biblical and Latinate anaphora with a range of vernacular poetic devices, such as ornamental alliteration, which includes double alliteration in nearly every line,³² and a stunning succession of interlinear alliteration on *s* (including alliteration on unstressed syllables), which marks the whole passage as a discrete section and highlights every instance of the anaphora. The literary origins of the anaphora are thus swathed with the sound of traditional poetry. But the alliteration also has a thematic significance. The end-linked alliteration connects the distribution of gifts to the beginning of the passage, where Christ is described as the fountainhead of all creation, as if to show that both mankind's gifts and Cynewulf's own poetic excellence come ultimately from God, thus taking up the common association in Christian Latin verse between the gifts of men and poetic inspiration.³³

Another vernacular device used in this passage is an envelope pattern – inspired perhaps by Gregory's enclosing repetitions – which literally surrounds the anaphora with a statement of the 'gifts of men' theme (*giefe sealde*, line 660b ... *giefe bryttað*, line 682b):

Da us geweorðade se þas world gescop,
godes gæstsunu, ond us **giefe sealde**, 660
 uppe mid englum ece stapelas,
 ond eac monigfealde modes **snyttru**
 seow ond sette geond sefan monna.

...

Swa se waldend us,
godbearn on grundum, his **giefe bryttað**. 682
 Nyle he ængum anum ealle **gesyllan**
gæstes snyttru, þy læs him gielp scepþe
 þurh his anes cræft ofer oþre forð.

As with the alliteration, the envelope pattern has an important allegorical function, in addition to its role in making the passage sound more authentically vernacular. The repetition of *modes snyttru* and *gæstes snyttru* recalls the opening of the poem, where 'the famous man' – the reader – is told to scrutinize spiritual mysteries, *gæstgerynum*, with the wisdom of his mind, *sefan snyttru*.³⁴ The envelope pattern (and assonance) also emphasizes

the warning that if we forget the source of our gifts, *giefe* can easily slide into *gielp*, ‘pride.’

Other repetitions serve to reinforce the message that Christ’s ultimate gift to men is the faculty of spiritual understanding. For instance, the comment that *sum mæg fromlice / ofer sealtne sæ sundwudu drifan* (‘another is able to drive the wave-wood boldly over the salty sea and stir the tumult of the ocean,’ lines 676b–677) ties in with a later pivotal passage in the poem, the simile (to which we will return later) which describes how with Christ’s help, we pass over the ocean of this life *geond sidne sæ, sundhengestum* (line 850). This connection is supported by the repetition of a whole line, *godes gæstsunu, ond us giefe sealde* (lines 660 and 860),³⁵ which links two of the most important passages of the poem.

Further, the climbing of a ‘high tree,’ (or ‘lowly tree’), *heanne beam / ... gestigan* (lines 678b–679a) recalls Christ climbing the cross, which Cynewulf elsewhere describes as a *heanne beam*.³⁶ Moreover, the comment *sum con wonga bigong, / wegas widgielle* (‘another knows the expanse of lands and the far-flung ways’) sounds similar to a later description of Christ’s gifts: *He us æt giefeð ond æhta sped, / welan ofer widlond, ond weder lipe / under swegles hleo* (‘he gives us food and prosperity of possessions, wealth across the wide earth and mild weather beneath the shelter of the sky’). Repetition also serves to link this passage with Christ’s first speech in the poem, in which he urges the apostles to go forth and evangelize: *sibbe sawað on sefan manna*, line 487; *seow ond sette geond sefan monna*, line 663. Cynewulf thus draws a link between Christ’s distribution of gifts, and his bidding to use the gift of eloquence to spread the message of Christianity.

We have seen that Cynewulf uses vernacular devices to blend the Latinate anaphora with the vernacular tradition. But he also shows his mastery in merging different streams of influence on the thematic level, in combining different Christian Latin and traditional heroic motifs. For although the main theme of the passage, the gifts of men, derives directly from Gregory, Cynewulf weaves a variety of other themes into the passage. To start with, the account of gifts has been rearranged and expanded (from Gregory’s six to ten) and ordered schematically, ‘the first five predominantly gifts of the mind, the second five predominantly

those of the body,' as Peter Clemoes noted.³⁷ This arrangement is emphasized by the anaphora, for each group of five gifts is first introduced by *sumum*, whereas all other repetitions involve only *sum mæg* ('one is able to').³⁸ J.E. Cross has suggested that Cynewulf may have been inspired in this change by St Paul's more general discussion of the 'gifts of men' in Ephesians 4.8, and maybe also by two New Testament parables.³⁹ The imagery of 'sowing' at the beginning of the passage recalls the parable of the Sower, and thus calls up ideas of divine inspiration, for in this parable the 'seed' is interpreted figuratively as 'the word of God' (Luke 8.11). Cynewulf may also have been inspired by Arator's imagery of 'sowing' as a metaphor for apostolic eloquence.⁴⁰ The statement that Christ 'sowed and set' (*seow ond sette*) gifts in the minds of men also recalls the parable of the 'talents' (Matthew 25.14–30; Luke 16.1–12), with its imagery of 'reaping' and 'sowing' to describe the advantages gained from employing God's gifts profitably,⁴¹ and it may also hark back to Arator: 'nor must I as a debtor pay for the buried money of a miserly mouth, and a barren field will not blame me as unfruitful in the seed of the word' (*nec debitor oris auari / Clausa talenta luam sterilemque in semine uerbi / Ieiunus culpabit ager*).⁴²

Cynewulf may also be drawing on Latin-inspired homilies, where *sum* is often combined with the 'fortunes of men' or 'gifts of men' themes.⁴³ For example, in an anonymous homily on the ascension we find that repeated *sum* structures a long list of the different ways in which damned souls are tortured by infernal fire.⁴⁴ The thematic link to homilies is emphasized by a homiletic stylistic feature: the use of doublets of alliterating verbs (*seow ond sette*, line 663a; *singan ond secgan*, line 667a).⁴⁵

In addition to all these Latinate and biblical allusions, Cynewulf also firmly anchors the passage thematically in the Old English poetic tradition, where enumerative use of *sum* is connected inseparably to two themes, the 'gifts of men,' and its converse, the '(mis)fortunes of men.'⁴⁶ Thus, rather than enumerating 'spiritual' gifts, Cynewulf mentions various aristocratic accomplishments (use of arrows, navigating a ship, climbing, wielding a sword), and thereby links into a stock theme in Old English and Old Norse poetry.⁴⁷ For example, Cynewulf's list recalls the enumeration of noble feats from the Old English poem *Gifts of Men*, which is also

highlighted by repeated *sum*, and is also reminiscent of stanza 3 from *Hyndlolióð*, which describes how Odin gives victory to some, gold to others, eloquence to many men, sailing winds to heroes and poetry to skalds, and bravery to champions, again in a passage marked by repeated *sumom*.⁴⁸ Of course, as some scholars have pointed out, it may well be that the repetition of *sum* in both *The Gifts of Men*, and even in Old Norse poetry is ultimately inspired by the biblical ‘gifts of men’ theme, just as the converse theme, the ‘fortunes of men’ has been shown to derive ultimately from Pauline rhetoric (and in particular, from the ‘Long’ text of the *Visio Sancti Pauli*, a Latin translation of the Greek-Egyptian *Apocalypse of St Paul*, where St Paul allegedly gives the details of the ‘visions and revelations’ that he mentions in II Corinthians 12, in a passage linked by the repetition of *alii*).⁴⁹ However, regardless of the ultimate origin of this stock theme, it is clear that to Anglo-Saxon ears, the enumeration of aristocratic gifts in combination with repeated *sum* must have sounded like a thoroughly native pattern.

We have seen that Cynewulf is able to use anaphora freely and flexibly, and develop it beyond its role in his source. He launches into *sum* anaphora in other poems as well, for example, in *Juliana*, where a passage marked by repeated *alios* in the Latin source is hugely expanded into a passage of more than twenty lines marked by *sum* anaphora.⁵⁰ Nor is the freewheeling use of anaphora limited to *sum*. For example, one of the central passages of allegorical exegesis in *Christ II*, the interpretation of Christ’s ‘leaps,’ is highlighted and explained in a simple and effective way by repeated *wæs se* in combination with alternating *hlyp–stiell*:

Wæs se forma hlyp þa he on fæmnan astag,	720
mægeð unmæle, ond þær mennisc hiw	
onfeng butan firenum þæt to frofre gewearð	
eallum eorðwarum. Wæs se oþer stiell	
bearnas gebyrda, þa he in binne wæs	
in cildes hiw clapum bewunden,	725
ealra þrymma þrym. Wæs se þridða hlyp ,	
rodorcyninges ræs, þa he on rode astag,	
fæder, frofre gæst. Wæs se feorða stiell	
in byrgenne, þa he þone beam ofgeaf,	
foldærne fæst. Wæs se fifta hlyp	730
þa he hellwarena heap forbygde	

in cwicsusle, cyning inne gebond,
 feonda foresprecan, fyrnum teagum,
 gromhydigne, þær he gen ligeð
 in carcerne clomnum gefæstnad, 735
 synnum gesæled. **Wæs se siexta hlyp,**
 haliges hyhtplega, þa he to heofonum astag
 on his ealdcyððe.

[The first leap was when He ascended into a virgin, a spotless maiden, and there took on human form, free from sins, which came to be a comfort to all earth-dwellers. The other spring was the birth of the child when He was in the crib, wrapped up in cloths in the form of a child, the Glory of all glories. The third leap was the bound of the Heaven-King when He, the Father, the comforting Spirit, ascended the cross. The fourth spring was into the tomb, fast in the earth-chamber, when He left the tree. The fifth leap was when He abased the crowd of hell-dwellers in living torment and tied up in fiery fetters the king within, the evil-minded advocate of fiends, where he still lies, fastened with chains in the prison, shackled by sins. The sixth leap was Holy One's hopeful movement when He ascended to the heavens into his former home.]

The inspiration for using the anaphora must have come from Gregory's Homily XXIX, where repeated *de* is part of the exegesis of a scriptural quotation (Song of Songs 2.8):⁵¹

de coelo uenit in uterum, **de** utero uenit in praesepe, **de** praesepe uenit in crucem, **de** cruce uenit in sepulcrum, **de** sepulcro rediit in coelum

[He came from heaven into the womb; from the womb He came into the manger; from the manger He came onto the Cross; from the Cross He came into the sepulchre; from the sepulchre he returned into heaven]

However, Cynewulf not only uses a completely different pattern of anaphora, but clearly takes it to a different level of elaboration, and combines it with other aural devices, such as repetition

(*mennisc hiw, cildes hiw*) and typically Cynewulfian polyptoton (*þrymma þrym*) and paronomasia (*rodorcyniges ... rode*).⁵²

I mentioned that Cynewulf represents a more mature stage in the process of the absorption of Latin rhetoric into Old English, because not only does he recognize and borrow rhetorical devices from his direct sources, he has also appropriated Latin devices into his own poetic repertoire through his wider reading of Latin verse. Anaphora has become such a trademark of his style that he can launch into an elaborate anaphora even when there is no basis for it in the source, just the merest hint of the theme. For example, in *Elene*, Cynewulf responds to an alliterative litotes in the source, *et mortua est non minima multitudo* ('not a few of them died') with an expanded list of the different ways in which the barbarian soldiers met their death, a version of the 'fortunes of men' theme linked by the repetition of *sum* (lines 131b–137).⁵³

Perhaps the best demonstration of Cynewulf's complete appropriation of anaphora can be seen in his combining it with rhyme – perhaps one of the most distinctly Latinate of devices.⁵⁴ Cynewulf is famous for his rhyme, and the passage that has attracted most attention is from the epilogue of *Elene* (lines 1236–51), which has a long stretch of fifteen lines of nearly continuous leonine rhymes.⁵⁵ I would like to discuss a different passage, from *Christ II*, which has no direct source, but in which a rhythmic repetition of *swa ... swa* together with a run of rhymes build a complex syntactic string of antitheses, which recall homiletic injunctions to choose between 'good and evil' (*swa god swa yfel*).⁵⁶

Hwæt, we nu gehyrdan hu þæt hælubearn
þurh his hydercyme hals eft forgeaf,
gefreode ond gefreopade folc under wolcnum,
mære meotudes sunu, þæt nu monna gehwylc
cwic þendan her wunað, geceosan mot 590
swa helle hienþu **swa** heofones mærþu
swa þæt leohte leoht **swa** ða laþan niht,
swa þrymmes þræce **swa** þystra wræce,
swa mid dryhten dream **swa** mid deoflum hream,
swa wite mid wraþum **swa** wuldor mid arum, 595
swa lif **swa** deað, **swa** him leofre bið
to gefremmanne, þenden flæsc ond gæst

wuniað in worulde. Wuldor þæs age
þrynsse þrym, þonc butan ende.

[Lo! We have now heard how the healing Son, the illustrious Son of the Creator, granted salvation through his advent, and freed and protected people below the skies, so that each man alive, while he is dwelling here, may choose either the humiliation of hell, or the glory of heaven, either the resplendent light or the loathsome night, either the throng of splendour, or the exile of darkness, either joy with the Lord or lamentation with devils, either punishment with enemies or glory with angels, either life or death, according to how he prefers to behave, while his flesh and spirit dwell in the world. For this may the host of the Trinity have glory and gratitude without end.]

The repetition of *swa ... swa* and leonine rhyme here serves to connect our choices and decisions in this world with our two possible destinations at Doomsday, and thus accentuate the main contrasts in the poem, between Nativity at Bethlehem and Ascension at Bethany, and in the leaps that Christ makes, between heaven and womb, and between cross and tomb. A sense of the imminence of Doom is suggested through the regular rhythm (supported by double alliteration), and the series of five rhyming antitheses that form an envelope pattern: between hell / heaven, heaven / hell, heaven / hell, heaven / hell, hell / heaven, oppositions which are finally clinched in a summarizing half-line, *swa lif swa deað* ('either life or death,' line 596a). A tension is set up between the tight constraints of rhythm, anaphora and rhyme, and the implied freedom of the phrase *geceosan mot*, 'may choose,' upon which all of the choices depend, syntactically and thematically.

Vernacular devices are also interwoven. An oral-traditional poetic opening marked by *hwæt*, and the 'we have heard' formula – *we nu gehyrdan* – announced the passage as a new juncture in the poem. At the beginning of the passage, there is paronomasia *gehyrdan ... hydercyme* ('heard ... advent'); *hælubearn ... hals* ('healing Son ... salvation'), which might recall the etymology of Jesus' name: *saluator*.⁵⁷ The rhyming homiletic doublets *gefreode ond gefreopade* and the rhyming phrase *folc under wolcnum* prepare

the way for the rhymes. And the passage is finished off with play on the paronomastic anagrams, *woruld*, ‘world’ and *wuldor*, ‘glory,’ as well as on the Cynewulfian polyptoton *þrýnysse þrým*, and finally with the aural ‘full stop,’ *þonc butan ende*.

I mentioned that there is no direct source for this passage, and that Cynewulf’s use of rhyme here is his own invention. The inspiration for the use of rhyme must have come from his wider reading in Latin literature. For example, Andy Orchard and Peter Clemoes have drawn attention to some lines from Sedulius’s *Carmen paschale* (Book IV, lines 27–30), which show a similar combination of anaphora and rhyme. These lines close an outstanding example of ten hexameter lines of sustained mostly leonine rhyme, combined with anaphora (emboldened):⁵⁸

Non mordax aerugo uorat, **non** tineasulcat,
Nec male defossum famulatur furibus aurum,
ieiunis qui ferre cibum, sitientibus haustum,
Hospitibus tectum, nudis largitur amictum
Solatur nexos in carcere, perforet aegros 25
Atque aliis largus, sibi tantum constat egenus,
Nec dubie in caelum substantia peruenit illa
Quae Christo conlata datur sub paupere forma
Quae damnis augmenta capit, **quae** spargitur ut sit
Quae perit ut maneat, **quae** uitam mortua praestat. 30

(Book IV, lines 21–30)

[Corrosive rust does not devour, nor does the moth make furrows, nor is hidden gold attended to wickedly by thieves. He brings food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, he gives a roof to strangers, clothing to the naked, he releases those bound in prison, he heals the sick, and is generous to others, although he remains so greatly needy for himself. Certainly that treasure has arrived in heaven, which, bestowed on Christ, is given in the form of something poor, which takes profits from losses, which is scattered in order that it may be, which perishes in order that it may remain, which although dead, offers life.]

Clemoes noted that the last three lines are crafted through

repetition of *quae* and through ‘caesural homoeoteleuton,’ that is, leonine rhyme, very similar to Cynewulf’s passage. A link can also be observed on the thematic level, for the repeated *quae* in Sedulius is combined with a set of negative conjunctions, which evoke heaven, as in Cynewulf’s passage where the repeated *swa* evokes visions of heaven (or hell). Both passages are also alike in their set of contrasts – the paradoxes in Sedulius and the antitheses in *Christ II*, sharply defined by the caesura. The chiasmus in the last line of Sedulius, the death / life, life / death pattern (*perit ... maneat ... uitam mortua*), also finds an echo in the alternations of life and death throughout Cynewulf’s passage, and in the envelope pattern on the temporal conjunction *þendan* ‘as long as,’ *þæt nu monna gehwylc / cwic þendan her wunað ... þenden flæsc ond gæst wuniað in worulde*, which surrounds and limits the list of choices.⁵⁹ (This theme is repeated later in the ‘exegesis,’ after the runic signature, where it is stated that one should not neglect the soul’s need, *þenden god wille / þæt he her in worulde wunian mote*, ‘as long as God wills that one may dwell here in the world,’ lines 817b–818.)

Still, while the parallels between the passage in Sedulius and in *Christ II* are remarkable, it is clear that the inspiration for Cynewulf’s rhymes and anaphora comes not just from this or any other single passage. The combination of rhyme and anaphora often occurs in Christian Latin poems, some of which Cynewulf was bound to have read. For example, the following passage from a (probably) fifth-century poem once attributed to Paulinus of Nola also displays sustained anaphora, interspersed with leonine rhyme (and other rhyming effects), to evoke the rejection of the world:⁶⁰

non aurum gemmasque uelim, non ditia regum	
regna nec immensas quas habet orbis opes,	
non ut densatos fascēs curuasque securēs	
pone sequar celsis conspiciendus equis	
non ut seruandi signent mea nomina fastus	125
turbæque nobilium limina nostra terat,	
non ut sic saltem subrepat blanda uoluptas;	
sed mihi contento quod satis est habeam.	
non longum uitæ cursum, non gaudia quaero	
corporeis nimium congrua deliciis,	130

hibernis totum citius cum transeat umbris
 floribus et, rigidi quos rapuere noti.
 in quis uita breuis, post mortem poena perennis.
 ipsum se damnat qui peritura rogat
da potius sensus dociles, **da** lumina menti, 135
da mortem membris quae perimunt animam.

[I should not desire gold and jewels, nor the splendidly rich kingdoms of kings, nor the immense wealth which the world has, nor should I pursue the bound *fasces* ['high office'] and the curved axe behind them ['authority']; nor must I be admired on proud steeds, nor days to be remembered mark my fame, and the crowd visit my abodes of nobility. Not in this way, at least, should the flattering desire for pleasure steal over me, but let me have what is sufficient to make me content: I do not seek either a long lifespan, nor congruous joys with carnal delights beyond measure, since all passes more swiftly than winter shadows, and flowers which rude friends pluck. In these things life is brief, and after death, the punishment is eternal. He who asks for things that will pass away condemns himself. Rather, give senses that can be taught, give enlightenment of thought, give death to the limbs which destroy the soul.]

Moreover, in the bilingual Anglo-Latin culture in which Cynewulf was immersed, rhyme was a favourite device, often used to show off learning. It was particularly popular as a flourish at the end of letters. For example, Boniface ends his letter to Nithard with an epilogue of rhyming octosyllables,⁶¹ and later in the eighth century, Archbishop Koaena of York ends a letter to Bishop Lul with a six-line flourish of dedicatory verse largely in leonine rhyme.⁶² The rhyming passages in *Elene* and *Christ II*, which are also used to close sections, thus fit into that literary custom.

I would like to end this chapter with a discussion of a device that Cynewulf likes to use at the end of his poems, the simile, which at least in its sustained and lengthy form is ultimately a classical device (as I argued in [chapter 3](#)). Cynewulf has absorbed the simile into his poetic repertoire so successfully that he can employ it freely even when it does not exist in his source. And his use of the simile testifies to his expertise in combining the vernacular

tradition with Latin learning, for we shall see that he ties in the simile with an array of other devices, both vernacular and Latin, to create an organic texture in which it is no longer easy to tell apart the Latinate from the vernacular.

The most striking sustained similes in Cynewulf's poems occur in *Elene* and in *Christ II*. The epilogue of *Elene*, which is not a paraphrase of a Latin source, has three similes, one of which (on the smelting of souls at Doomsday) has already been mentioned in [chapter 3](#).⁶³ The other two depict the sea and the wind as images of transience. These similes, printed below, are not found in the putative Latin source, the *Acta Cyriaci*, nor is any comparable image of transience found in that text. Cynewulf draws here on his wider reading, from the Bible (where the wind frequently appears as an image of futility), and from vernacular prose homilies, where similes are often employed.

ƿis geswiðrad, gomen æfter gearum, geogoð is gecyrred, ald onmedla. ƿ wæs geara	1265
geogoðhades glæm. Nu synt geardagas æfter fyrstmearce forð gewitene, lifwynne geliden, swa ƿ toglideð, flodas gefysde. ƿ æghwam bið læne under lyfte; landes frætwe	1270
gewitaþ under wolcnum winde geliccost þonne he for hæleðum hlud astigeð, wæðeð be wolcnum, wedende færeð ond eft semninga swige gewyrðeð, in nedcleofan nearwe geheaðrod,	1275
þream forþrycced; swa þeos world eall gewiteð ond eac swa some þe hire on wurdon atydrede, tionleg nimeð, ðonne Dryhten sylf dom geseceð	1280
engla weorude.	

[Joy (W) and pleasure has dwindled over the years; youth and former glory has turned; ours (U) was once the beauty of youth; the days of yore have left now, after a while; life's joys have slipped, just as the seas (L), the ebbing tides, glide

away. Wealth (F) is loaned to everyone under the heavens; the treasures of the land will disappear under the sky most like the wind when it blows up loudly in the face of men and roams through the firmament, faring furiously, and then suddenly grows quiet, closely confined in its fetter-chamber, forcibly suppressed. So will this world wholly pass away; and likewise destructive fire will carry off those who were begotten in it, when the Lord himself will come to seek out judgment with His host of angels.]

The first simile states that life's joys will ebb like the tide, just as the sea glides away, *swa togliðeð*. In a brilliant display of Cynewulf's weaving of rhetorical devices into his art, this simile depends on the penultimate runic letter of the signature, 𐌺, the letter L, which means 'sea.' The last part of the runic signature, 𐌿 *æghwam bið / læne under lyfte* ('Wealth (F) is loaned to everyone under the heavens'), is thus a kind of *apo koinou*, a 'bridge passage' that links the image of the sea to another simile that likens the passing of this world to the wind (*winde geliccost*), which blows up loudly, rushes through the sky, and suddenly subsides, 'just as this world will entirely pass away' (*swa þeos world / eall gewiteð*). Moreover, the last syllable of Cynewulf's name, here represented in a signature of scattered runes, is blended into this vision of transience, so that the Latinate simile is interwoven with the ancient Germanic runic alphabet. Cynewulf thus implicitly includes himself in this prophecy of doom: not only will his body, his *fæcne hus* ('mutable house,' line 1236b) age and die, but paradoxically, even the act of memorializing his name in a runic signature is made to suggest that his name and poetic reputation will inevitably fade away and be forgotten – a convincing handling of the modesty topos.

Tied in with these similes are an array of devices that deepen the sense of transience. Polyptoton on *gearum* ('years'), *geara* ('formerly'), *geardagas* ('days of yore') conveys a sense of fleetingness by implying that a 'year' inevitably runs its course and dissolves into merely the days of 'yore.'⁶⁴ The awareness of loss, as the year rolls on to yester-year, is further evoked by alliteration on -g (*gomen ... gearum, geogoð / ... geara / geogoðhades glæm... geardagas*), which links the words 'pleasure,' 'years,' 'youth' and 'beauty,' as if to stress the passing of pleasure, youth and beauty

with the passing of time.

The main pattern that highlights and joins the two similes is homoeoteleuton on the inflection *-eð* on verbs at the end of lines (varied by a weakened version of homoeoteleuton on *geswiðrad*, *gecyrrad*, *gewitaþ*, *geheaðrod*, *forþrycced*). The homoeoteleuton mainly marks finite verbs of movement, thus emphasizing the passing of the wind and the world. As Joseph Wine observes, the verbs marked by this homoeoteleuton describe the wind's behaviour as 'rising [loudly], hunting [the heavens], travelling [in a rage] and finally turning to stillness.'⁶⁵ The verbs gather strength and reach a climax (*astigeð*, / *wæðeð* ... *færeð*) and the sound-play on dental fricatives builds up on *geheaðrod* and *þream forþrycced*, so that the full weight of alliteration collapses onto *þeos world*, 'this world,' which is doomed to destruction. The sound effects dwindle as they reach *eall gewiteð*, 'entirely pass away.' And the warning that this world will be destroyed seems to be aurally fulfilled in a sequence of repetition, which forms an envelope pattern: *forð gewitene* ... *gewitaþ under wolcnum* (line 1271a) ... *wolcnum* (line 1273a) ... *gewiteð* (line 1277a). Since homoeoteleuton links these similes to the eventual vision of Judgment, it is emphasized that the destruction of this world leads inevitably to Doomsday, ending ominously with a vision of the Lord who will seek out Judgment, *dom geseceð*. This movement from a vision of transience to Doom is highlighted by a kind of progressive word-play: *gewyrðeð* ... *gewiteð* ... *wurdon* ... *weorude*.

Homoeoteleuton is in fact one of Cynewulf's favourite devices. He often establishes a pattern of homoeoteleuton at the end of lines, but then breaks it at some points (for instance in line 1273).⁶⁶ A similar technique can be seen in the following passages from *Christ II*:

Farað nu geond ealne yrmenne grund,
geond widwegas, weoredum cyðað,
bodiað ond bremað beorhtne geleafan,
ond fulwiað folc under roderum.
Hweorfað to hæpnum, hergas breotaþ,
fyllað ond feogað, feondscype dwæscað,
sibbe sawað on sefan manna
þurh meahta sped.

(*Christ II*,

lines 481–488a)

Song ahofun

aras ufancunde, æþeling heredun,
lofedun liffruman, leohte gefegun
þe of þæs hælendes heafelan lixte.
lines 502b–505)

(*Christ II*,

The homoeoteleuton must ultimately have been drawn from Cynewulf's reading of Latin poetry. Arator, for example, often brings sections to a resounding close with homoeoteleuton, as in the following example, where homoeoteleuton also mostly marks the ends of lines (the pattern is broken at line 145 and 146, and in the last line, is closed by a leonine rhyme):⁶⁷

Quod tunc rite canam promissaque debita soluam
Si sua dona ferat. Duo sunt haec signa figurae
Ut sit simplicitas, quam congrua diligit ales,
Quae ne tarda gerat sine dogmatis igne tepores,
Sit pariter succensa fides. Ibi destinat undis
Unanimes; hic ore iubet flagrare docentes.
Mentibus instat amor; sermonibus aestuat ardor. (Book I,
lines 141–7)

[I shall fitly sing this [mystery], and I shall fulfil the promises owed if [the Spirit] brings His gifts. These two signs are allegories that there should be simplicity, which very appropriately [this] bird loves, [and] that, lest [this simplicity] be sluggish [and] grow lukewarm without the fire of doctrine, there should also be faith that has been kindled. There [in the Jordan] He appointed by means of the waters [that they be] of one mind; here [with fire] He bids that they teach with flaming words. Love presses hard upon their minds; zeal burns in their words.]

Another poem with a startling simile is *Christ II*. The inspiration for the simile is a brief injunction in the Latin source:

Quamuis adhuc rerum perturbationibus animus fluctuet, iam
tamen spei uestrae anchoram in aeternam patriam fugite,

intentionem mentis in uera luce solidate.

[Although your soul may have floated hither and thither with the confusion of things so far, fasten now the anchor of your hope into the eternal homeland; fix the aim of your mind on the true light.]

In Cynewulf's verse, this concise metaphor is developed into detailed and leisurely simile, which not only concludes the poem, but also explicitly demonstrates the message of the entire poem, namely that we should learn to think in two ways, literally and allegorically:

Nu is þon gelicost swa we on laguflode	850
ofer cald wæter ceolum liðan	
geond sidne sæ, sundhengestum,	
flodwudu fergen. Is þæt frecne stream	
yða ofermæta þe we her on lacað	
geond þas wacan woruld, windge holmas	855
ofer deop gelad. Wæs se drohtað strong	
ærþon we to londe geliden hæfdon	
ofer hreone hrycg. Þa us help bicwom,	
þæt us to hælo hyþe gelædde,	
godes gæstsunu, ond us giefse sealde	860
þæt we oncnawan magun ofer ceoles bord	
hwær we sælan sceolon sundhengestas,	
ealde yðmearas, ancra fæste.	
Utan us to þære hyðe hyht stapelian,	
ða us gerymde rodera waldend,	865
halge on heahþu, þa he heofonum astag.	

[Now it is most like this: as though we are on the ocean-stream, sailing across cold water over the wide sea in ships, ferried in sea-steeds, flood-wood. The treacherous current of the waves is excessively strong on which we bob about here through this weak world, and the waters over the deep ocean are choppy. The conditions were hardgoing, before we had sailed over the rough ridge to land. Then help came to us, God's Spirit-Son, who led us to safety into the harbour, and granted us the gift that we could know where to moor

our sea-steeds, ancient wave-horses, securely with anchors over the ship's side. Let us fasten our hope in that harbour which the Ruler of the firmament, the Holy One in the heights, opened for us when he ascended into the heavens.]

As with the similes in *Elene*, the subject-matter here is highly Latinate. Nautical metaphors, in which Christ is portrayed as the helmsman (*gubernator*), or the 'ferryman of life' (*uitae portitor*) who will steer us safely through this turbulent life, are commonly employed in Latin literature.⁶⁸ Arator, for instance, depicts life at court as a hazardous sea-voyage, and his entering into Christianity as a safe anchorage.⁶⁹

Ecclesiam subeo dimissa naufragus aula;
Perfida mundani desero uela freti.
Transferor ad niueas Petri sine turbine caulas
Et fruor optati iam statione soli.
Litoris ille sinus ad carbasa nostra parauit
Fluctibus in mediis cui uia sicca fuit. (Epistola ad
Vigilium, lines 9–14)

[Abandoning the court, I enter the Church as a shipwrecked man; I leave the faithless sails of the worldly sea. I am brought over to the snow-white, storm-free sheepfolds of Peter, and now I enjoy the anchorage of a welcome land. He for whom there was a dry road in the midst of the waves has prepared for our canvas a bay in the coast.]

By punning on *carbasa*, 'boat' or 'canvas,' Arator also suggests another common Latin topos, namely that his life and his poetic inspiration are both steered by Christ the helmsman. Aldhelm also concludes his poetic *Carmen de uirginitate* (lines 2801–11) with an imaginative version of this nautical topos.⁷⁰ He presents himself as a 'wave-tossed sailor' (*quassatus nauita*, line 2810) who by finishing his poem, has crossed a stormy sea and now heads for safety of the harbour, where the 'metrical anchor' (*anchora ... metrica*, line 2809) will hold him fast.

Cynewulf recognizes this dual use of the sea-crossing topos (denoting both religious and artistic inspiration) and reflects this in his version, by making his account as poetically inspired as he

can, employing vernacular formulas, the envelope pattern, and above all, compounds, to show off his poetic expertise. As Robert Diamond has noted, the simile is studded with traditional formulaic diction: ‘of the 28 verses in the passage, 21 are demonstrably formulaic (75 percent), including 12 whole-verse repeats (42.8 percent).’⁷¹ The simile is also imprinted with an envelope pattern: *ceolum* (line 852b) ... *sundhengestum* (line 852b) ... *ceoles* (line 861b)... *sundhengestas* (line 862b). Most striking, however, is that the simile is enclosed by six traditional compounds describing the sea, the ships, and Christ, which, appropriately for such a symbolic passage, invite interpretation. There are three at the start of the simile (*laguflode*, ‘sea-flood,’ *sundhengestum* ‘sea-steeds,’ *flodwudu* ‘flood-crafts’) and three at its close (*gæstsunu*, ‘spiritual Son,’ *sundhengestas* ‘sea-steeds,’ *yðmearas* ‘wave-horses’).

These compounds also serve to adapt the Latinate topos of the metaphorical sea-voyage to the native tradition and its description of real heroic sea voyages. The compounds link this passage to a highly traditional description of an actual sea-voyage in *Elene*, lines 225–51 (not derived from the Latin source) that is also layered with traditional compounds for ‘boat,’ including ‘sea-horse’ (*fearoðhengestas*, *sæmearas*, *sæmearh*, *wæghengestas*) and other more general compounds for ‘boat’ (*brimpisan*, *brimwudu*, *wægflotan*) and ‘sea’ (*fifelwæg*, *earhgeblond*, *egstreame*, *merestræte*, *bæðweg*). In their rich variety of traditional compounds for ‘boat’ and ‘sea,’ both these passages from *Elene* and *Christ II* are remarkably similar to the sea-voyages in *Beowulf* (especially to *Beowulf* lines 1896a–1913).⁷² In this exaltation of vernacular devices, and above all compounds, Cynewulf thus manages to take a highly Latinate topos and give it the appearance of an ancient traditional theme of vernacular heroic verse.

There is no doubt that Cynewulf is one of the most Latinate of vernacular poets, and that his poetry is permeated by Latin themes and rhetorical style. Moreover, Cynewulf’s poetry is the best witness to the fact that Latin rhetoric is not just borrowed unwittingly from the immediate sources, the result of mechanical ‘blind’ translation. Rather, Cynewulf shows that Latin rhetorical devices are recognized, not just in one text, but gleaned from a wide range of sources – as Cynewulf himself said, *ic samnode wide*,

‘I gathered widely’ – and employed consciously and dexterously to further his evangelistic message.

But perhaps Cynewulf’s greatest poetic distinction is that as opposed to some lesser poets, such as that of *Judgment Day II*, whose more literal translation means the abandonment of many traditional features, his Latinity does not compromise his excellence as a vernacular *scop*. His art is that of fusing themes and stylistic devices from both cultures into an organic whole. For example, we have seen how Cynewulf immerses Latinate devices into vernacular aural effects, and how his word-play combines vernacular sounds with learned etymologies, and is thus used to imply that Latin learning and the vernacular tradition ultimately go back to the same divine source.

A similar synthesis of tradition and innovation which is typical of Cynewulf is his artful treatment of traditional formulas. For example, the combination of *begang* or *begong* (‘way,’ ‘circuit’) with ‘water’ or ‘sky,’ which is found repeatedly in *Beowulf* (*ofer geofenes begang* ‘over the circuit of the ocean,’ *under swegles begong* ‘under the circuit of the sky,’ *ofer floda begang*) is subtly modified in Cynewulf’s *Fates of the Apostles*, where ‘water’ and ‘sky’ are changed to ‘song’ (*bysses giddes begang* ‘the circuit of this song,’ line 89a; *bisses galdres begang*, line 108a). This twist to the traditional pattern links it in with a Latinate topos, where ‘streams’ and ‘dew’ are images of poetic inspiration.⁷³ Alcuin for example, prays for ‘eloquence flowing like dew’ (*rorifluam loquelam*), and elsewhere, praises the teacher who provided his pupils with ‘a flood of rhetorical eloquence’ (*rhetoricae ... refluamina linguae*);⁷⁴ and Aldhelm describes God-given inspiration as ‘a draught of perpetual dew’ (*perpetui roris haustu*).⁷⁵ Cynewulf thus employs traditional stylistic elements in innovative ways, to tie them in with Latinate culture, and to highlight his own inspiration (he encloses the runic signature with this formula, in a kind of envelope pattern).⁷⁶

In Cynewulf’s hands, therefore, Latinity and learnedness do not displace tradition, but blend with it and enrich it. And his particular blend has proved so successful that it has inspired a number of others, such as the *Phoenix*-poet, to take him as a model.

Conclusion

This book has attempted to illuminate a delicate matter, the influence of Latin rhetoric on Old English verse. Whereas it is widely accepted that some vernacular poets made use of Latin schemes and tropes, it is not entirely clear how they gained their knowledge of these figures. There is insufficient evidence to show that the mastery of such devices was acquired from rhetorical manuals or from schooling, so we cannot just take it for granted that Old English poets were using Latin devices consciously, or that they were familiar with their learned names and roles. I argued that a more likely scenario for the influence of Latin rhetorical devices into Old English poetry is that poets imbibed these devices from the actual Latin texts they were reading, mainly Christian Latin and Anglo-Latin authors, and hence absorbed some of these devices into their own verse. Therefore, a fruitful approach for examining the process of importation is to look at adaptations of Latin sources, and assess how the rhetorical devices in the sources were handled by the vernacular poets. This is what the book has attempted to do.

Scrutiny of the poems revealed that Old English poets did recognize Latin devices in their sources, and that they adapted a few chosen patterns deliberately to suit their needs. I tried to move beyond a mere cataloguing of these devices, and ask not only what patterns were borrowed, but also why some devices such as the simile, polyptoton, or metonymy were favoured, and how they were employed in the Old English poems. For instance, I argued that the *Phoenix*-poet developed the simile because this device reflects the rhetorical artifice of his source, but nevertheless alludes to the deeper Christian meaning. The poet of *Judgment Day II* spurned such seductive decorative devices altogether and instead selected exhortatory devices with a biblical and homiletic ring, such as the apostrophe, polyptoton, and the ‘thought, word, and deed’ triad. The poet of *Riddle 40*, however, allowed himself the liberty of adapting dangerously pagan metonymy, because he was

writing for a learned audience who could be counted upon to recognize that this is nothing more than a particularly educated brand of poetic licence.

Overall, it seems that two main considerations encourage poets to borrow Latinate devices. First, devices are more likely to be accepted if they are not deemed to distort Christian meaning, but rather to support it. Biblical or homiletic devices, such as polyptoton and anaphora, are thus especially favoured. Second, devices are more likely to be borrowed if they fit the idiom of traditional poetry, and if they can be threaded into the larger shape of the poetic garment, into its warp and weft. The two most effective methods of achieving such assimilation are combining the Latin device with a plethora of aural vernacular devices, and bestowing a semblance of familiarity on it through frequent use: the simile is repeated, the inexpressibility topos is recycled, the polyptoton appears in different guises.

The previous chapters have also assessed the relative success of different poets in their task of adapting Latin rhetoric. On the least successful front was the unimaginatively faithful *Judgment Day II*, where Latinity comes at the expense of vernacular style, and thus undermines the native tradition. The most successful were those poets who did not just slavishly copy Latin models from the immediate source, but adapted Latin devices from their wider reading, and adopted them into their own style. The *Phoenix*-poet, for example, recognised patterns such as anaphora and the inexpressibility topos in his source, and inspired by his acquaintance with these devices in Latin authors such as Avitus and Dracontius, developed the device beyond its role in the source, and blended it with native patterns into moments of artistic intensity. The successful merging of traditions reaches its climax in the poems of Cynewulf, which are innovative creations in an individual style that harmoniously unites the best of both traditions. ‘Latinate’ and ‘vernacular’ patterns have become indistinguishable, so successfully are they embroidered into Cynewulf’s cloth of divers colours. This method of borrowing and assimilation can be viewed against the backdrop of Anglo-Saxon culture as a whole: just as the Franks Casket mingles scenes from Germanic legend with biblical images, and the Ruthwell Cross places events from the life of Christ alongside runic inscription, so

does new Latin influence breath life into an old tradition, leading to some of the greatest achievements of Anglo-Saxon poetic art.

Notes

Introduction

- 1 Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, 118–19.
- 2 See Calder and Allen, ed., *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry: The Major Latin Texts in Translation*, for Latin texts related to a wide number of Old English poems. For a survey of the field, see Scragg, ‘Source Study,’ 39–45. Two database projects that aim to identify Latin sources for Anglo-Saxon texts are the *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici: A Register of Written Sources Used by Authors in Anglo-Saxon England*, and *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, under the general editorship of Paul Szarmach. See Biggs, et al., ed., *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version*. Helmut Gneuss’s *Handlist* indicates the authors available in Anglo-Saxon England, as does Michael Lapidge’s complementary ‘Catalogue of Classical and Patristic Authors,’ in Lapidge, *ASL*, 275–342.
- 3 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, IX, i, 2.
- 4 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VIII, preface, 6.
- 5 Cicero, *De oratore*, I, xvi, 70: *oratori poeta ... socius*.
- 6 Pasternack, *The Textuality of Old English Poetry*, 19.
- 7 Parry and Lord argued that since Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* relies on repeated formulas, and since the epic verse of illiterate Serbian oral poets is also heavily dependent on formulas, Homer was an oral poet. See Lord, *The Singer of Tales*; Parry, ed., *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry*. Likewise, Magoun, in ‘The Oral-Formulaic Character of Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poetry,’ 446–7, sought to prove that because *Beowulf* made repeated use of formulas, it had not been written with pen in hand, but was the record of a bard’s improvisation. For an overview, see Orchard, ‘Oral Tradition,’ at 103–4; idem, ‘Looking for an

Echo: The Oral Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Literature,' 225–7; Foley, *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research: An Introduction and Annotated Bibliography*. For a survey of views on the orality of Old English poetry, see Olsen, 'Oral-Formulaic Research in Old English Studies: I,' 558–9.

- 8 The seminal article is Benson, 'The Literary Character of Anglo-Saxon Formulaic Poetry,' 334–41. On the formulaic nature of the learned and Latinate Cynewulf, see Diamond, 'The Diction of the Signed Poems of Cynewulf,' 311–22; Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf,' 274–87. On formulas in Anglo-Latin verse, see Lapidge, 'Aldhelm's Latin Poetry and Old English Verse,' 247–69; Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, 102–25.
- 9 Kundera, *Testaments Betrayed*, 108–15. On critical attitudes to repetition in Old English, see Calder, 'The Study of Style in Old English Poetry,' 11–58.
- 10 Hopkins, 'Poetry and Verse,' in House and Storey, ed., *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 282.
- 11 Puttenham, in Wilcock and Walker, ed., *The Arte of English Poesie*, IV, 8.
- 12 O'Brien O'Keeffe, *Visible Song*, 4. See further Foley, *Homer's Traditional Art*; idem, *How to Read an Oral Poem*.
- 13 On sources and analogues, see Calder and Allen, ed., *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry*; Scragg, 'Source Study,' 39–45; Bately, 'Knowledge of Latin Literature,' 35–45. Intertextuality is discussed in Pasternack, *Textuality*, 19–21 and 52–9.
- 14 Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, esp. 130–62.
- 15 Lapidge, *ASL*, 133–73 (inventories of Latin books and surviving manuscripts) and 275–342 (catalogue of classical and patristic authors); idem, 'Surviving Booklists from Anglo-Saxon England,' esp. 82–9; Gneuss, 26–115; idem, 'Anglo-Saxon Libraries from the Conversion to the Benedictine Reform,' 651–72.

1. Knowledge of Rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon England

- 1 For useful guides to the terminology, see Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*; Knappe, *Traditionen der klassischen Rhetorik im angelsächsischen England*, 479–90.
- 2 Campbell, 'Learned Rhetoric in Old English Poetry,' 192; idem, 'Knowledge of Rhetorical Figures in Anglo-Saxon England,' 3–13; Knappe, *Traditionen*, 323–73; idem, 'Classical Rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon England,' esp. 7–20; Wine, *Figurative Language in Cynewulf*.
- 3 Knappe, *Traditionen*.
- 4 Gneuss; Lapidge, *ASL*.
- 5 Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece*, [chapters 2](#) and [3](#). Lapidge, in 'The Study of Greek at the School of Canterbury in the Seventh Century,' 123–9, and Bodden, 'Evidence for Knowledge of Greek in Anglo-Saxon England,' 217–46, show that the outstanding exception to the general ignorance of Greek in Anglo-Saxon England was at the school of Theodore and Hadrian.
- 6 Bonner, *Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire*, 42–50; idem, 'Roman Oratory,' 335–83; Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 53–4.
- 7 Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 229–313; Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome*; Parks, *The Roman Rhetorical Schools*, esp. 61–107.
- 8 For an account of the Roman education system, see Marrou, *History of Education*, 265–83. See also Knappe, *Traditionen*, 2–4.
- 9 Gwynn, *Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian*, esp. 46–122; Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome*, 23–37. On the preliminary exercises, the progymnasmata, see Curtius, *European Literature*, 442.
- 10 See Lapidge, 'Gildas's Education and the Latin Culture of Sub-Roman Britain,' 27–8.
- 11 Juvenal, *Saturae*, XV, 111–12: *Gallia cauidicos docuit fecunda Britannos / de conducendo loquitur iam rhetore Thule*. Quoted in Lapidge, 'Gildas's Education,' 29. See also Chadwick,

'Intellectual Contacts between Britain and Gaul in the Fifth Century,' 233–49.

- 12 *Historia Augusta*, XXIX, 14: *Bonosus ... origine Britannus ... ut ipse dicebat, rhetoris filius, ut ab aliis comperi, paedagogi litterarii* ('Bonosus ... a Briton by origin ... as he himself would say, the son of a rhetor, as learned from others, the son of an elementary school teacher').
- 13 Lapidge, 'Gildas's Education,' 31, note 26.
- 14 Hood, ed., 'Confessio,' chapters 10 and 13, in *St Patrick: His Writings and Muirchu's Life*, 25. See Lapidge, 'Gildas's Education,' 28 and 32.
- 15 Lapidge, 'Gildas's Education,' esp. 41–50. See also Lapidge's entry s.v. Gildas in *BEASE*, 204.
- 16 Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity*, 36–9 and 83–5. See too Lapidge's entry s.v. monasticism in *BEASE*, 320.
- 17 Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 21–5.
- 18 On schools in Anglo-Saxon England, see Lapidge, 'Schools, Learning and Literature in Tenth-Century England,' esp. 3–5; idem, 'The Study of Latin Texts in Late Anglo-Saxon England,' 459–98; idem, 'Latin Learning in Ninth-Century England,' 409–39.
- 19 Priscian's *Praeexercitamina*, a translation of Hermogenes' προγυμνάσματα (progymnasmata), a work influential in bringing Greek rhetorical theory to the later Latin Middle Ages, was probably not known in Anglo-Saxon England. For an overview, see Knappe, *Traditionen*, 124–6. Lapidge does not list the *Praeexercitamina* under the works of Priscian known in Anglo-Saxon England, in *ASL*, 326–7.
- 20 A lesser work on rhetoric, Book V of Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (c. 430), seems to have been available, but only scarcely and mostly from the later Anglo-Saxon period. It is mentioned in two eleventh-century book-lists (see Lapidge, *ASL*, 136 and 142), and of the seven manuscripts (mostly containing excerpts) listed by Lapidge (*ASL*, 321), the earliest is a Welsh manuscript of early tenth-century English provenance, Cambridge, Corpus Christi

College 153, which as Knappe notes, contains only the beginning of Book V. (Knappe, *Traditionen*, 127–35.) Anglo-saxon scholars may have had a notion of Book V through the medium of Remigius of Auxerre’s commentary. Nevertheless, Book V does not seem to have occasioned much interest, and seems to have been one of the least popular parts of the work (Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 176). While Bede, Lantfred, and Byrhtferth quote from *De nuptiis*, they do not quote from Book V. The only quotation comes from Abbo of Fleury’s commentary on the calculus of Victorius of Aquitaine, which he composed on the Continent. See Lapidge, *ASL*, 220, 241, 245, and 272.

- 21 Cf. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, 119, note 3, and 313; Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, II, 516, note 1.
- 22 Verheijen, ed., *Confessiones* VI, v, at 78: *uerbis apertissimis et humillimo genere loquendi se cunctis praebens*.
- 23 No Christian alternative was set up in competition to the pagan schools of grammar and rhetoric in late Antiquity. See Bardy, ‘L’église et l’enseignement pendant les trois premiers siècles,’ 1–28; ‘L’église et l’enseignement au IV^e siècle,’ 525–49 and 1–27; Riché, *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West*, 122–9.
- 24 Labriolle, *History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius*, 6–38; Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, II, 521–34; Auerbach, *Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, 89–92 and 104–9. For further bibliography, see Roberts, *Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 62, note 5.
- 25 Hartel, ed., *S. Pontii Meropii Paulini Nolani Epistulae*, XXXVIII, vi, at 329: *sibi habeant litteras suas oratores, sibi sapientiam suam philosophi, sibi diuitias suas diuites, sibi regna sua reges; nobis gloria et possessio et regnum Christus est*.
- 26 For Bede’s account of the poet Cædmon, see *HE* IV, 25.
- 27 *Institutio oratoria*, I, iv, 2. For an overview of grammarians’ definitions of grammar, see Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 3–8. For a discussion of what Knappe terms the ‘grammatical tradition of rhetoric,’ see Knappe, *Traditionen*,

esp. 82–90.

- 28 *De oratore*, II, xxvii, 120; *Institutio oratoria* VIII, iii, 89.
- 29 See Knappe, *Traditionen*, 86–7 (and further bibliography cited there); Holtz, ‘Grammairiens et rhéteurs romains en concurrence pour l’enseignement des figures de rhétorique,’ esp. his conclusion, 218–20; Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*, 12–18.
- 30 See Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l’enseignement grammatical: Étude sur l’Ars Donati et sa diffusion (ive-ixe s.) et édition critique*. See also Schindel, *Die lateinischen Figurenlehren des 5. bis 7. Jahrhundert und Donats Vergilkommentar*, who reconstructs Donatian scholia, at 19–95, and presents the figures of Isidorus Iunior and Sergius, at 204–41 and 258–79. See too Knappe’s discussion of the *Ars maior*, and grammatical manuals containing figures in *Traditionen*, at 91–6.
- 31 *Scientia interpretandi* comprised *poetarum enarratio*, the exegesis of literature, as discussed by Quintilian (I, iv, 2). For the traditional divisions of *grammatica*, see Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, at 6, figure int.1. On the Stoic model of allegorical exegesis of the poets, see *ibid.*, 34–8.
- 32 *Expositio psalmorum* was studied at the Canterbury school (see *ASL*, 176); Bede quotes from it extensively (*ASL*, 205), and Asser, Lantfred, Abbo, and Byrhtferth all cite it (*ASL*, 238, 241, 244, and 269).
- 33 Gneuss and Lapidge, *ASL*, 311, list nineteen manuscripts of the *Etymologiae* of Anglo-Saxon origin or provenance. The text was studied at Canterbury (*ASL*, 176–8), it is mentioned in the list of books bequeathed in the eleventh century by Leofric to Exeter (*ASL*, 140), and it is cited extensively by Aldhelm, Bede, Abbo, and Byrhtferth (*ASL*, 181, 213–14, 245, and 271), as well as by Lantfred and Ælfric (*ASL*, 241 and 261).
- 34 Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 243–9. On the Antiochene schools, see *ibid.*, 16–27, and on schooling in rhetoric in the Byzantine empire, see *ibid.*, 260–1, and Lapidge, ‘The Career of Archbishop Theodore,’ 96–7.
- 35 We can assume that Theodore was trained in rhetoric because

biblical commentaries from the Canterbury school refer to the eight *accessus*, that is, outlines of the goals or grades of the work, which are often enumerated in introductions to Aphthonius's progymnasmata by Byzantine teachers of rhetoric. See Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 302–3, 261, and 432–3, and see further Lapidge, 'The Study of Greek at the School of Canterbury,' 128–33. Following Bischoff (*Mittelalterliche Studien*, 209), Knappe argues, in *Traditionen*, that the reference to the *accessus* may imply that Theodore brought a handbook of progymnasmata with him to England.

- 36 Lapidge, 'The Career of Archbishop Theodore,' 107–11; *Biblical Commentaries*, 261 and 432–3. For biographies, see Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 5–81 (Theodore) and 82–132 (Hadrian).
- 37 See Lapidge, *ASL*, 175–8.
- 38 Bede, *HE* IV.2, in Colgrave and Mynors, 332–4. Aldhelm adds Roman law to the list of subjects. See Ehwald, ed., *Epistula* I, in *Aldhelmi Opera*, 476–7, trans., Lapidge and Herren, in *Aldhelm: The Prose Works*, 152–3.
- 39 In a commentary on Mark 9.3. See Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 522 and 410–11. The only other direct reference to oratory is the cryptic comment, *simbolice oratores dicunt quod grammatici metaforice, ut est 'solstitia.'* ('Orators say symbolically what grammarians say metaphorically, as "it is the solstice"'). See Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 396–7 and 506.
- 40 In a letter (c. 675) to his bishop, Leuthere. See Ehwald, ed., *Epistula* I, in *Aldhelmi Opera*, 477. See the reference to Aldhelm's studies with Theodore and Hadrian in the twelfth-century biographical synopsis attributed to John of Worcester, cited in Remley, 'Aldhelm as Old English Poet,' 91. Winterbottom, in 'Aldhelm's Prose Style and its Origins,' 64 and 70, argues that Aldhelm may have derived his rhetorical prose style from his education at Canterbury. Aldhelm seems to have spent a relatively short time at Canterbury, maybe just two or three years. See Lapidge and Herren, ed., *Aldhelm: The Prose Works*, 8.

- 41 The fullest surviving collection is preserved in an eleventh-century manuscript, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana M. 79 sup., which is described in *Biblical Commentaries*, 275–87. Four collections of exegetical materials from this manuscript are edited and translated in *Biblical Commentaries*, 298–423. Additional continental manuscript witnesses, the eighth- and ninth-century Leiden-family glossaries, are printed in Appendix I, 533–60. On the commentaries as a record of Theodore’s and Hadrian’s teaching, see Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 266–74.
- 42 Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 259–62.
- 43 Ibid., 447–8.
- 44 Knappe, *Traditionen*, 205–15.
- 45 Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 259, note 80. See too the index, s.v. ‘rhetoric,’ at 608–9.
- 46 Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. Lat. Q. 69, fos. 20^r–36^r; Hessels, ed., *A Late Eighth-Century Latin–Anglo-Saxon Glossary*. On the manuscript and its derivation from Canterbury, see Lapidge, ‘The School of Theodore and Hadrian,’ 150–5; and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 177–8.
- 47 Hessels, ed., *A Late Eighth-Century Latin–Anglo-Saxon Glossary*, chapter xxviii, lines 18–21 and 24–88. On the contents of the *Leiden Glossary*, see Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 545–8; *ASL*, 33 and 175–7. For a comparison of the figures in the *Leiden Glossary* to those in the *Expositio psalmorum*, see Knappe, *Traditionen*, 222–5.
- 48 Bede claims that many pupils there were as fluent in Latin and Greek as they were in their own tongue. See *HE* IV.2, in Colgrave and Mynors, 334. Lapidge, in ‘The Study of Greek at the School of Canterbury,’ 125–39, argues that Bede is overstating the case.
- 49 On the date, see Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae historiam ecclesiasticam gentis Anglorum*, I, cxlv. Cf. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, I, 74–5, 84, and 86. The text is edited by Kendall, in Jones, ed., *Bedaes opera didascalica*, 142–71. I have also referred throughout to the translation of Kendall, ed. and trans., *Bede: Libri II De Arte*

Metrica et De Schematibus et Tropis: The Art of Poetry and Rhetoric.

- 50 Schindel, 'Die Quellen von Bedas Figurenlehre,' 169–86; Palmer, 'Bede as Textbook Writer,' 574–5. On Donatus, see Kaster, *Guardians of Language*, 275–8 (number 52); Law, *The Insular Latin Grammarians*, 14–16. Lapidge notes in *ASL*, 195, that Bede also drew on the Roman grammatical text of Aquila Romanus, entitled *De figuris sententiarum et elocutionis*, which contained definitions of rhetorical figures.
- 51 On Bede and grammar, see Irvine, 'Bede the Grammarian and the Scope of Grammatical Studies in Eighth-Century Northumbria,' 15–44. On Bede's exegetical method, see Jenkins, 'Bede as Exegete and Theologian,' 152–200; Ward, *The Venerable Bede*, 41–84 and 62–5.
- 52 Ray, 'Bede and Cicero,' 1–15. For criticism of this view, see now Knappe, *Traditionen*, 151–5.
- 53 Laistner, *A Hand-List of Bede Manuscripts*, 88–9 and 131–6. See King's manuscript list in Jones, ed., *Bedae opera didascalica*, 60–79; Manitius, *Geschichte*, 75 and 510–11. Gneuss lists only two English manuscripts of *De schematibus et tropis*: British Library, Harley 521, a fragment from the turn of the tenth and eleventh century, and Worcester, Cathedral Library, Q. 5, from the end of the tenth century.
- 54 On 778 as the date for the bequest, see Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation*, 339. On the identification of books from Ælberht's library, see Lapidge, *ASL*, 60 and 41–2.
- 55 Godman, ed., *Alcuin: The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, lines 1432–3: *ille, ubi diuersis sitientia corda fluentis / doctrinae et uario studiorum rore rigabat.*
- 56 As well as the three literary arts, Alcuin lists the scientific arts (lines 1437–45): music theory, astronomy, arithmetic and geometry, and in addition, Easter-calculation and natural history. For discussion, see Holtz, 'Alcuin et la renaissance des arts libéraux,' 45–60. Bullough, in *Alcuin*, 253, nominates the account of the liberal arts 'the first medieval description of a programme of instruction based on that scheme.' On the introduction of the liberal arts to the Middle Ages, see

Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, 44–6, 64–7, and 73–6; Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 175–80; Knappe, *Traditionen*, 74, especially note 4, and 75–8. On the seven liberal arts as an educational ideal, see Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 316–19.

57 Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, line 1435, at 112.

58 On Alcuin's view that all branches of learning are a propaedeutic for the study of scripture, the aim and end of all studies, see Fox, 'Alcuin as Exile and Educator,' 220–4.

59 Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, lxvi.

60 On the stylized arrangement of the catalogue, see Holtz, 'Alcuin et la renaissance des arts libéraux,' 48. The description of the trivium (lines 1434–5) closely echoes Venantius Fortunatus' *Vita S. Martini*, I, lines 29–31. See Lapidge, 'Knowledge of the Poems of Venantius Fortunatus,' 405–6; Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, 112, note to lines 1435 and 1436. The catalogue of authors is modelled on Venantius Fortunatus's *Vita Martini*, lines 14–25, as Godman notes, in *Alcuin*, lxxi–lxxii.

61 Holtz, 'Alcuin et la renaissance des arts libéraux,' 48, and note 7.

62 Lapidge, *ASL*, 230. Cicero is not excerpted in Alcuin's collectaneum the *De laude Dei*, compiled during Alcuin's York years. See Lapidge, *ASL*, 231–3.

63 On Alcuin's departure c. 786, see Bullough, *Alcuin*, 336–46. The books were probably shipped to the Continent sometime after the late 790s. See Lapidge, 'Booklists from Anglo-Saxon England,' 45–6; idem, 'Latin Learning in Ninth-Century England,' 426–7; Bullough, *Alcuin*, 359–61. On Abbo of Fleury, see below, note 72.

64 Howell, ed., *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne*, 22–33; Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, 125. Bullough, *Alcuin*, 294–5, note 132, and 382, note 158.

65 Knappe, *Traditionen*, 16.

66 Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, 125; Howell, ed., *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne*, 7–8. On Cicero's *De inuentione* as a source

for *De rhetorica*, see also Bullough, *Alcuin*, 382, note 158, and on the influence of Cicero through the mediation of Julius Victor's *Ars rhetorica*, see *ibid.*, 294–5, note 132.

- 67 See Bullough, 'Alcuin's Cultural Influence: The Evidence of the Manuscripts,' 1–26. See also the list of continental manuscripts of *De rhetorica*, ranging from the ninth to the sixteenth century, and the references to it in medieval book-lists, in Knappe, *Traditionen*, Appendix C, 501–10. Neither Gneuss nor Lapidge, *ASL*, list *De rhetorica*.
- 68 Knappe, *Traditionen*, 163–6 and 171–84. See also Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, chapter 4.
- 69 On the revival of learning during King Alfred's reign, see Bullough, 'The Educational Tradition in England,' 457–67.
- 70 Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, II, i; Sedgfield, ed., *King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius De Consolatione Philosophiae*, XXXIX, xii, at 135.
- 71 For Byrhtferth's adaptation, see Baker and Lapidge, ed., *Byrhtferth's Enchiridion*, 162–9.
- 72 Lapidge, *ASL*, 244. At 297, Lapidge also notes one late eleventh-century manuscript of *De inuentione* that may derive from Anglo-Saxon England: Dublin, Trinity College 297. On Abbo, see Knappe, 250–4, who notes that, according to his biographer, Marius Victorinus, Abbo was knowledgeable in ancient rhetoric. There is no evidence that Abbo's *Quaestiones grammaticales* was much known in England, since the two extant manuscripts are northern French of the early eleventh century. See Bullough, 'The Educational Tradition,' 484.
- 73 Zupitza, ed., *Ælfrics Grammatik und Glossar*, 295.4. Chapters XXV and XXVI of his grammar are devoted to schemes and tropes respectively. See further Gneuss, 'Study of Language,' 30. Knappe, in *Traditionen*, 256–7, notes that Ælfric drew on Donatus's *Ars maior*, probably through the medium of the anonymous *Excerptiones de Prisciano*.
- 74 Assigning dates to Old English poems is a notoriously risky undertaking, as most poems display a mixture of linguistic forms associated with different dialects and periods. *Beowulf*, for example, is dated anywhere between the eighth and the

eleventh century. See Donald Scragg's overview, s.v. 'Dating of Vernacular Texts,' in *BEASE*, 137–8. However, three important generic groups of Old English poems – biblical verse, the elegies, the poetry of Cynewulf – are said to date to before the late tenth century. With the exception of *Genesis B*, Old English biblical verse is generally thought to be early, from the eighth century (Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, 36–7; Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 69–72), even from the late seventh (Irving, ed. *Exodus*, 23–5). Klinck, ed., *The Old English Elegies*, 20, argues on linguistic grounds that it is 'highly unlikely that any of the [elegies] were composed long after 950.' Cynewulf has generally been dated to the ninth century (Gradon, ed. *Elene*, 22–3; Sisam, 'Cynewulf and his Poetry,' 9), and Conner's tenth-century dating of Cynewulf ('On Dating Cynewulf') has recently been questioned by McCulloh ('Did Cynewulf Use a Martyrology? Reconsidering the Sources of *The Fates of the Apostles*'), who argues that Cynewulf could have composed his poems as early as the eighth century.

- 75 Schlauch, 'The Dream of the Rood as Prosopopoeia,' 428–41; Cross, 'On the Genre of *The Wanderer*,' 63–75; Pope, 'Dramatic Voices in *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*,' 533–70. For further bibliography, see Gardner, *The Construction of Christian Poetry in Old English*, 123–5, note 1.
- 76 Bartlett, *Larger Rhetorical Patterns*, 4, note 4. See also Gneuss, 'The Study of Language,' 31: 'we must ask whether certain stylistic devices in Old English literature conventionally regarded as part of an ancient Germanic tradition did not partly owe their popularity to Latin models.'
- 77 Campbell, 'Learned Rhetoric,' 189–201; idem, 'Knowledge of Rhetorical Figures,' 1–20; idem, 'Adaptation of Classical Rhetoric,' 173–97; Wine, *Figurative Language in Cynewulf*; Knappe, *Traditionen*, 329–73. See also the doctoral dissertations of O'Connor, 'Rhetorical Patterns in Old English Poetry,' 49–154; McPherson, 'The Influence of Latin Rhetoric on Old English Poetry,' 25–198; Jehle, 'Latin Rhetoric in the Signed Poems of Cynewulf,' 47–251.
- 78 Johnson, 'The Rhetoric of Brunanburh,' 489; Campbell, 'Learned Rhetoric,' 194–201; 'Adaptation of Classical

Rhetoric,' 173–97; Finnegan, 'Christ and Satan and Classical Rhetoric,' 151–61; Schlauch, 'Prosopopoeia,' 23–34; idem, 'Old English *Encomium Urbis*,' 14–28; Andersson, 'The Speeches in the *Waldere* Fragments,' 21–9.

79 ASPR, VI, cx.

80 Campbell, 'Learned Rhetoric,' 195; Knappe, 'Classical Rhetoric,' 22.

81 *Málskrúðsfræði* constitutes the latter part of Þorðarson's *Third Grammatical Treatise*, printed in Ólsen, ed., *Den tredje og fjerde grammatiske afhandling i Snorres Edda*.

82 Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 161–78; Lapidge, *Anglo-Latin Literature 600–899*, 409–98; idem, *Anglo-Latin Literature 900–1066*, 1–48.

83 *Epistula* XXII, xxix, in Wright, ed., *Jerome*, 124: *Quae enim communicatio luci ad tenebras, qui consensus Christo et Belial? Quid facit cum psalterio Horatius? Cum euangeliiis Maro? Cum apostolo Cicero?* The passage echoes II Corinthians 6.15–16, as well as Tertullian's, *De praescriptione Haereticorum*, 7 – later recalled in Alcuin's question, 'what has Ingeld to do with Christ? (*quid Hinieldus cum Christo?*)', in Dümmler, ed., 'Epistula 124,' in *Alcuini Epistolae*, 183.

84 Jerome's extensive borrowing from pagan Latin authors (such as Terence, Cicero, Horace, Sallust, Lucretius, Ovid, Quintilian, Plutarch, Pliny the Younger, Philostratus, Lucan, and above all, Vergil) is documented by Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, 100–309; idem, 'Jerome and the Latin Classics,' 216–27.

85 Kermode, *An Appetite for Poetry*, 175.

86 On the breach between theory and practice in Jerome, see Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, 269–328, esp. 310–11: 'As as Christian he [Jerome] felt obliged to condemn pagan literature, but he could not cease admiring – and reading – what he condemned.'

87 *De doctrina Christiana*, IV, ii, 3–4, translated by Green, *On Christian Teaching*, 101–2.

88 Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones*, I, i, 10. See further Norden,

Kunstprosa, 512–16; Labriolle, *Histoire de la littérature chrétienne*, 20–2; Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 473–77.

- 89 Michael Roberts notes that in this period, ‘to be educated meant to be educated in the schools of grammar and rhetoric.’ Roberts, *Biblical Epic*, 63.
- 90 See the overview in Lapidge, ‘Anglo-Latin Literature,’ 3–4; Lapidge, ‘Surviving Booklists from Anglo-Saxon England,’ 33–89; see also the Christian Latin authors listed in Alcuin’s book-list, in Lapidge, *ASL*, 230–1; idem, ‘The Study of Latin Texts,’ 459 and 470–98; idem, ‘Schools, Learning and Literature in Tenth-Century England,’ 1–48; Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 161–70.
- 91 See Roberts, *Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase in Late Antiquity*, 1 (and bibliography cited there). Francesco Stella, in *La poesia carolingia latina a tema biblico*, 5–12, outlines the history of late antique biblical poetry, and discusses Carolingian biblical paraphrases, especially at 209–52.
- 92 See Roberts, 68–9, and notes 30 and 32; Wieland, ‘Alcuin’s Ambiguous Attitude Towards the Classics,’ 90–4. On the pagan style of Christian Latin verse, see Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, 382–9.
- 93 On the topos of poetry’s ‘seductiveness,’ see Springer, *The Gospel as Epic in Late Antiquity*, 33; Thraede, ‘Untersuchungen zum Ursprung und zur Geschichte der christlichen Poesie,’ 149–50.
- 94 *Libri euangeliorum*, IV, lines 804–5: *uersibus ut nostris diuinae gloria legis / ornamenta libens captaret terrestria linguae*.
- 95 *Libri euangeliorum*, preface, lines 19 and 25–6. See further Fontaine, *Naissance de la poésie dans l’occident chrétien*, 72 ; Curtius, *European Literature*, 235; Ziolkowski, ‘Classical Influences on Views of Inspiration,’ 23–4.
- 96 *Liber de uiris illustribus*, 84 (PL 23, 729–30).
- 97 On Juvenecus as a staple text in Anglo-Saxon libraries, see Lapidge, *ASL*, 127. Juvenecus’s popularity is described in Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 161–2; On citations of Juvenecus see Lapidge, *ASL*, 182, 219, 230, 233, 241, 248, and 271; and see

also *Fontes*, s.v. Iuuenus. Gneuss and Lapidge, *ASL*, 319, list six manuscripts written or owned in Anglo-Saxon England. Alcuin, in Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, line 1551, at 124, lists Juvenius as an author in the York library. On Juvenius's role in the Anglo-Saxon curriculum, see Lapidge, 'Study of Latin Texts,' 108–13.

- 98 Wieland, 'Alcuin's Ambiguous Attitude toward the Classics,' 89.
- 99 Roberts, *Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase*, 165–71. On Sedulius's allegorical method, see Small, 'Rhetoric and Exegesis in Sedulius' *Carmen paschale*,' 223–44.
- 100 The genre of the *opus geminatum*, involving the conversion of a prose work into a poetic work and vice versa, is itself a kind of paraphrase, and thus descended from an elementary rhetorical exercise. See Godman, 'The Anglo-Latin *Opus Geminatum*,' 215–26; Thraede, 'Nachträge zum Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum: Arator,' 188; Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 164–6.
- 101 Lapidge, 'Anglo-Latin Literature,' 3–4; idem, 'Surviving Booklists,' 45–9; idem, *ASL*, 124 and 127; Ogilvy, *Books Known to the English*, 239–40.
- 102 See the overview in Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 163–6. Sedulius's name heads Alcuin's list of the York library poets (Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, 124, line 1551). Gneuss, and Lapidge *ASL*, 331, list eight manuscripts written or owned in Anglo-Saxon England. The poem is listed in the tenth-century book-list of Æthelstan the grammarian, in Leofric's bequest to Exeter, and in a late eleventh-century book-list possibly from Worcester (Lapidge, *ASL*, 134, 139–40, and 141–2). Aldhelm, Bede, and Wulfstan of Winchester quote from the poem extensively (Lapidge, *ASL*, 185–6, 224, and 249). The poem is also quoted by Alcuin, Asser, Lantfred, Abbo, Ælfric, and Byrhtferth (*ASL*, 233, 239, 242, 246, 264, and 273).
- 103 For a biography, see Hillier, *Arator on The Acts of the Apostles: A Baptismal Commentary*, 5–8. Thraede, 'Nachträge zum Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum: Arator,' 187. On the revival of rhetoric, see Barnish, 'Liberty and Advocacy in

Ennodius of Pavia: The Significance of Rhetorical Education in Late Antique Italy,' 20.

- 104 See Hillier, *Arator on The Acts of the Apostles: A Baptismal Commentary*, 1–3.
- 105 Wright, 'Arator's Use of Caelius Sedulius,' 51. Cf. Thraede, 'Nachträge zum Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum: Arator' 187–96.
- 106 Thraede, 'Nachträge zum Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum: Arator,' 188.
- 107 Ehwald, ed., *De metris*, LXX, 21.
- 108 Laistner, ed., *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum et Retractatio*, 3.
- 109 On Arator as a curriculum author, see Lapidge, 'Study of Latin Texts,' 116–24; idem, 'Surviving Booklists,' 49, 66, and 70; idem, *ASL*, 127. Alcuin mentions Arator in his list of the poets in the York library (Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, line 1552, at 124). Arator is also listed in Leofric's bequest to Exeter (*ASL*, 139–40); and in a late eleventh-century inventory, probably from Worcester (*ASL*, 141–2). The *Historia Apostolica* is quoted extensively by Aldhelm, Bede, and Wulfstan of Winchester (*ASL*, 178–9, 195–6, 248). Alcuin cites the poem (in his *De laude Dei*), and it is also cited by Lantfred and Byrhtferth (*ASL* 232, 240, and 267).

2. The Patterns of Latin and Vernacular Verse

- 1 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, IX, iii, 54: *omnibus scriptores sua nomina dederunt, sed uaria et ut cuique fingenti placuit*. Quoted in Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry*, 9.
- 2 Frédéric, *La répétition: étude linguistique et rhétorique*, 22–6.
- 3 On 'paroemia,' see Campbell, 'Learned Rhetoric,' 199; on this device as 'gnomic saying,' see, for example, Williams, *Gnomic Poetry*, 3. For a definition of 'litotes,' see Knappe, *Traditionen*, 485; and on this device as 'understatement,' see Bracher, 'Understatement in Old English Poetry,' 915–34.
- 4 On Aldhelm's indebtedness to vernacular style, see Lapidge, 'Aldhelm's Latin Poetry and Old English Verse,' 255–69;

Orchard, *Poetic Art*, esp. 98–125.

- 5 Wright, 'Bede and Vergil,' esp. 377. See also the *apparatus fontium* in Jaager, ed., *Bedas metrische Vita sancti Cuthberti*; Lapidge, *ASL*, 193–227.
- 6 MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottobon. lat. 1354 (s. xi/xii), fol. 58. Quoted in Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 274.
- 7 On the poem's influence, see the second register in the critical apparatus in Jaager, ed., *Bedas metrische Vita sancti Cuthberti*. On the manuscripts and transmission, see idem, 33–6; Lapidge, 'Prolegomena to an Edition of Bede's Metrical "Vita Sancti Cuthberti"', 127–63. Bede's popularity abroad is discussed in Jones, 'Bede's Place in Medieval Schools,' 270–7.
- 8 See above, p. 18, note 100.
- 9 Godman, 'The Anglo-Latin *Opus Geminatum*,' 215–29; idem, ed., *Alcuin*, xliii–xliv and lxxviii–lxxxviii; Wieland, 'Geminus stilus: Studies in Anglo-Latin Hagiography,' 113–33. For the anonymous prose *Life*, see Colgrave, ed., *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, 59–139.
- 10 Lapidge, 'Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*,' 351.
- 11 In the prose *Life*, Bede mentions Cuthbert's 'eloquent speech' (*altiloquo ... ore*, line 491). See also the description of Cuthbert's eloquence in the metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*, lines 681–2. Cf. *HE* IV, 27.
- 12 On Arator's use of the imagery of daylight and darkness, see Lapidge, 'Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*,' esp. 349–51.
- 13 *HE* V, 18. Bede's description of Aldhelm is applied to Bede by Byrhtferth, in the *Historia Regum*, in Arnold, ed., *Symeonis Opera*, 23. See Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth and the Early Sections of the *Historia Regum*,' 336.
- 14 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, II, i, at 152: *rerum uerborumque translatio*.
- 15 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, xi, at 148: *cum ab hisdem litteris diuersa uerba ponuntur*.
- 16 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, II, x, at 158: *transcensio*

quaedam uerborum ordinem turbans. Cf. Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, XI, at 113–16. On hyperbaton in the works of Bede and other Anglo-Latin poets, see now Thornbury, ‘Anglo-Saxon Poetics,’ esp. 141–8. On Aldhelm’s use of hyperbaton, see Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 10; and on Alcuin’s, see Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, ciii. For a discussion of hyperbaton in Latin prose, see Adams, ‘A Type of Hyperbaton in Latin Prose,’ 1–16. On hyperbaton as a characteristic feature of Celtic-Latin authors, see Kerlouégan ‘Une mode stylistique dans la prose latine des pays celtiques,’ 275–97; Winterbottom, ‘A Celtic Hyperbaton?,’ 210–11.

- 17 This echo of Arator (*Historia Apostolica*, I, line 147) is discussed by Lapidge, in ‘Bede’s *Metrical Vita S. Cuthberti*,’ 344. Lapidge provides a detailed overview of leonine rhyme in Carolingian and Ottonian poetry from the eighth century to the tenth in ‘Some Latin Poems as Evidence for the Reign of Athelstan,’ 54–8. On the use of leonine rhyme in ninth-century Carolingian verse, see Strecker, ‘Studien zu karolinischen Dichtern V: Leonische Hexameter und Pentameter im 9. Jahrhundert,’ 213–51. Orchard discusses leonine rhyme in Aldhelm’s verse in *Poetic Art*, 14–15. For Alcuin’s use of the device, see Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, civ–cv.
- 18 For Bede’s narrow definition of homoeoteleuton as a figure in which the middle and final sections of a verse or clause end in the same syllable, see Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, xii, at 149. But for my broader definition, see Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, IX, iii, 77, at 490. On homoeoteleuton in Latin verse, see Shackleton Bailey, ‘Homoeoteleuton in Non-Dactylic Latin Verse,’ 61–71. Cf. Guggenheimer, *Rhyme Effects and Rhyming Figures*, 100–8; Frédéric, *Répétition*, 30–5. Homoeoteleuton in Alcuin’s verse is discussed in Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, civ–cv; and in Aldhelm’s prose, in Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 8–10. On the relationship of homoeoteleuton to rhyme, see Moskalew, *Formular Language and Poetic Design in the Aeneid*, 33–9; Clarke, ‘Intentional Rhyme in Vergil and Ovid,’ 49–77.
- 19 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, ix, at 147: *denominatio ... quoties dictio pene similis ponitur in significatione diuersa, mutata uidelicet littera uel syllaba*.

- 20 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, II, vii, at 156–7: *aut enim totum a parte ostendit ... aut contra*.
- 21 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, II, iv, at 155: *transnominatio*.
- 22 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, ii, at 144: *coniunctio ... quando multa pendentia aut uno uerbo aut una sententia concluduntur*.
- 23 On antithesis in classical Latin verse, see Wills, *Repetition*, 458–60.
- 24 Examples of onomastic paronomasia are listed in the index to McKinlay's edition, at 191–3. Cf. O'Hara, *True Names. Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay*, esp. 1–56 (on etymological thinking in Greek literature and in Latin literature before Vergil) and 60–289 (on etymological paronomasia in Vergil).
- 25 See, for example, *Historia Apostolica*, I, line 28, where *lustrare* means both 'shine' and 'wander.' On this pun in Boniface, see Orchard, 'Old Sources, New Resources: Finding the Right Formula for Boniface,' 23.
- 26 Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, XI, at 113–14: *optima ... uersus dactylici ac pulcherrima est positio*. Lines 18 and 24 are golden lines (lines 1 and 15 are 'near-golden'). The term 'golden line' was coined by John Dryden, in the Preface to the 'Second Miscellany,' in Noyes, ed., *The Poetical Works*, 177. On the golden line, see Winbolt, *Latin Hexameter Verse*, 219–22. On the pattern in Vergil, see Young, in 'Schematized Word Order in Vergil,' 515–22; in Sedulius, see Wright, '*Hisperica Famina* and Caelius Sedulius,' 76; in Aldhelm, see Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 96–7; and in Alcuin, see Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, civ.
- 27 Lapidge, 'Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*,' 350.
- 28 Curtius, *European Literature*, 181–2 and 191–4; Barchiesi, 'Virgilian Narrative: Ecphrasis,' 271–81.
- 29 Bede terms a simile 'parabole' ('parable'). See Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, II, xiii, at 170: *rerum genere dissimilium comparatio*. The simile's classical background is described by Anderson, in 'Homer and His Successors,' 81–7. On similes in

Vergil's verse, see, for example, Hornsby, *Patterns of Action in the Aeneid*, 1–140; a catalogue of Vergil's similes is given at 143–4.

- 30 Lapidge, 'Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*,' 353–4.
- 31 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, xvi, at 151: *oratio multis nexa coniunctionibus*.
- 32 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, xiii, at 150: *cum diuersis casibus uariatur oratio*. See further Wills, *Repetition*, 12, 33–41, and 189–268. For a history of the term, see Belardi, 'Per la storia della nozione di "polip-toto,"' 123–44; Frédéric, *Répétition*, 39–41; Lausberg, *Handbuch der liter-arischen Rhetorik*, 325–9. For examples of the device in classical literature, see Landgraf, 'De figuris etymologicis linguae latinae,' 1–69.
- 33 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, vi, at 146–7: *cum eadem dictio bis saepiusue per principia uersuum repetitur*. For general discussion of the device, see Wills, *Repetition*, esp. 353–71 and 397–414. On anaphora in Theocritus and Vergil, see Timpanaro, *Contributi di filologia e di storia della lingua Latina*, 219–87, and in Alcuin, see Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, cvi–cvii.
- 34 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, II, xi, at 161: *dictio fidem excedens augendi minuendique causa*.
- 35 Curtius, *European Literature*, 159–60. On the inexpressibility topos in classical literature, see Cook, ed., *Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus*, liv–lvi. Examples of the topos in Anglo-Latin verse can be found in the Preface to Aldhelm's *De uirginitate*, lines 30–2, in Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 351; and in Bede's *Hexameron* (PL 91, 43).
- 36 *Beowulf*, lines 366a, 874a, and 867b–874a; *Maxims I*, line 4a; *Riddle 60*, line 10a; *The Phoenix*, lines 127a and 548a.
- 37 On the poem's relation to Latin versions of the legend, see Brooks, ed., *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles*, xv–xviii. Latin versions are given in Blatt, ed., *Die lateinischen Bearbeitungen der Acta Andreae et Matthiae apud Anthropophagos*. On the skaldic background to this passage, see Frank, 'North-Sea Soundings in *Andreas*,' at 8–11. For the

recently revived notion that the *Andreas*-poet knew and consciously borrowed from *Beowulf*, see Riedinger, 'The Formulaic Relationship between *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, 283–312. See now Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf,' 291–7, who notes that nearly two hundred formulas are shared by *Beowulf* and *Andreas*.

- 38 The main ground for the attribution is that *Andreas* is followed in the manuscript by Cynewulf's *Fates of the Apostles*, which has been assumed to be its epilogue. See further Fulk, 'Cynewulf: Canon, Dialect, and Date,' 4–9. On the evidence of formulas and other stylistic parallels, Orchard now argues, in 'Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf,' 278–94, that *Andreas* was not composed by Cynewulf, but that the poet borrowed from Cynewulf's verse.
- 39 Cf. *The Fates of the Apostles*; *Christ II*, lines 481–90.
- 40 Hieatt, 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia,' 49–62; Hill, 'Figural Narrative in *Andreas*,' 261–73. On fire and flood as portents of Doomsday, see Caie, ed., *The Old English Poem Judgement Day II*, 75.
- 41 ASPR, II, 45–6.
- 42 Stanley, in 'Rhymes in English Medieval Verse' 20, and Macrae-Gibson, in ed., *The Old English Riming Poem*, 21–5, note that there was probably no perceived distinction between rhyme and assonance in vernacular verse. On assonance and rhyme (the consonance of terminal sounds) in *Beowulf*, see now Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, esp. 66–7.
- 43 Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration in Anglo-Saxon Song and Story,' 431–63; idem, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 58–65; Griffith, ed., *Judith*, 25–9. On alliteration in Old Norse, see Gordon, *Introduction to Old Norse*, xxxvi and 316–19. Orchard's definitions of different types of ornamental alliteration will be cited as and when such patterns occur in the discussion.
- 44 Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration,' 431; Bliss, *Old English Metre*, 12.
- 45 Pope, ed., *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection*, I, at 124–5.

- 46 The pattern is defined as 'echoic repetition' by Kintgen, in 'Echoic Repetition in Old English Poetry, especially *The Dream of the Rood*,' 202–23, and as the 'echo word' by Beaty, in 'The Echo-Word in *Beowulf* with a Note on the *Finnsburg Fragment*,' 366. Battles adopts this term in his detailed discussion of the device in 'The Art of the *Scop*,' 168–240. Rosier, in 'The Literal-Figurative Identity of *The Wanderer*,' 366–9, defines the mode of such repetitive versifying as 'generative composition.' For this method of composition in *Beowulf*, see Gardner, 'Compositional Techniques of the *Beowulf* Poet.'
- 47 Frank, 'Some Uses of Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse,' 207–26, esp. note 7.
- 48 On puns in *Beowulf*, see Robinson, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style*, 21 and 38; Sharma, 'Movement and Space as Metaphor in Old English Poetry,' 207–39; Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 213.
- 49 Bartlett, ed., *Larger Rhetorical Patterns*, 49, and see more generally 49–61. The classic study is Jackson, 'Incremental Repetition in the Early Welsh *Englyn*,' 304–21. On the use of the pattern in *Judith* and *Beowulf*, see Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, 89–91; Greenfield, 'Grendel's Approach to Heorot,' 275–84; Renoir, 'Point of View and Design for Terror,' 154–67; O'Keefe, 'Beowulf, Lines 702b–836,' 487–8; Lapidge, 'Beowulf and the Psychology of Terror,' 383–4; Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 34–7.
- 50 Bartlett, *Larger Rhetorical Patterns*, 9, and see more generally 10–29. On envelope patterns elsewhere in *Andreas*, see Hieatt, 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia,' 59–62; and see also her other articles listed in the bibliography. Cf. Stévanovitch, *La Genèse du manuscrit Junius XI de la Bodleienne*, I, 220–22; idem, 'Envelope Patterns in *Genesis A and B*,' 465–78; Griffith, 'Alliterative Licence and the Rhetorical Use of Proper Names in *The Battle of Maldon*,' 66–70.
- 51 Pasternack, *Textuality*, 11–12 and 120–46.
- 52 Niles, *Beowulf: The Poem and its Tradition*, 152–62. Cf. Tonsfeldt, 'Ring Structure in *Beowulf*,' 193–204; Lord, 'Ring Composition in *Maldon*,' 233–42.

- 53 End-rhyme is relatively rare in vernacular verse. See Brooks, ed., *Andreas and Fates of the Apostles*, 92, note to line 867.
- 54 *meoduscweren*, *ymbeldæge*, *searuhæbbende*, *guðræs*, *sorgbyrþen*, *beorþegu*, *ombehtþegnas*, *æschere*, *dunscræfum*, *heaðowælme*, *fyrgnastas*, *geomorgidd*, *forhtferð*, *fusleoð*, *hereteam*, and *lyftgelac*. On compounds in *Beowulf*, see Klaeber, ed., *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, lxiv. For lists of compounds in *Beowulf*, see Clemoes, *Interactions of Thought and Language in Old English Poetry*, 508–9; Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 69–72.
- 55 *ondwist*, *meoduscweren*, *sorgbyrðen*, *heaðowælme*, *fyrgnastas*, *eagsyne*, and *lyftgelac*. On hapax legomena in *Andreas*, see Brooks, ed. *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles*, vi.
- 56 Gardner, 'The Old English Kenning: A Characteristic Feature of Germanic Poetic Diction?', 109–17; idem, 'The Application of the term "Kenning",' 464–8. Cf. Wolff, 'Über den Stil der altgermanischen Poesie,' 214–29; Marquardt, *Die altenglischen Kenningar*, 103–340; Collins, 'Kenning in Anglo-Saxon Poetry,' 1–17; Rankin, 'A Study of the Kennings in Anglo-Saxon Poetry,' 357–422. On kennings in skaldic verse, see Brodeur, 'The Meaning of Snorri's Categories,' 129–47. For a reading of the kennings in *Andreas* through 'skaldic spectacles,' see now Frank, 'North-Sea Soundings in *Andreas*,' 3–11.
- 57 *Wylm* usually refers to a surge of fire, as in *fyles wylm* (*Daniel*, line 214a). However, *wylm* sometimes refers to a 'surge of water': in *Andreas* (lines 367b, 452a, 516b and 863b), *Elene* (line 39a) *The Phoenix* (line 64a), and *Beowulf* (line 1764b and 2411b). See Orchard's discussion, in *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 69–70, of the double reference of *guðwine* ('battle-friend') either to a 'sword' or to a 'warrior,' and of *hildeleoma* ('battle-flame') either to a 'sword' or to the 'fire' breathed by the dragon.
- 58 Smithers, 'Five Notes on Old English Texts,' 67–75; Heinemann, '*Ealuscerwen*-*Meoduscweren*, the Cup of Death and *Baldrs Draumar*,' 3–10; Rowlands, 'OE *ealuscerwen* / *meoduscweren* and the Concept of "Paying for Mead",' 1–12; Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 82, and further bibliography cited there. See now Frank, 'North-Sea

Soundings in *Andreas*,’ 8–9 (and note 23 for further bibliography).

- 59 Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, 39 and 247–53; Robinson, *Appositive Style*, esp. 3–6; idem, ‘Two Aspects of Variation in Old English Poetry,’ 130–8. See further O’Keeffe, ‘Diction, Variation, the Formula,’ 94–8; Heinzel, *Über den Stil der altgermanischen Poesie*, 3–9; Knipp, ‘*Beowulf* 2210b–2323,’ 775–85; Standop, ‘Formen der Variation im *Beowulf*,’ 55–63; Leslie, ‘Analysis of Stylistic Devices and Effects in Anglo-Saxon Literature,’ 131–3. On variation in Old Norse poetry, see McTurk, ‘Variation in *Beowulf* and the Poetic Edda,’ 141–60.
- 60 On doublets in Old English poetry, see Kendall, *The Metrical Grammar of Beowulf*, 110–15; and in Old English prose, see Koskeniemi, *Repetitive Word Pairs in Old and Early Middle English Prose*, esp. 11–74; Bately, ‘Old English Prose Before and During the Reign of Alfred,’ 113. On the use of doublets more widely in Germanic literature, see Olszewska, ‘Alliterative Phrases in the *Ormulum*,’ 122–7.
- 61 Clemoes, *Interactions*, 43–4 and 154–75; idem, ‘Style as a Criterion for Dating the Composition of *Beowulf*,’ 180; Orchard, ‘Crying Wolf: Oral Style and the *Sermones Lupi*,’ 245–9.
- 62 Apo koinou was identified a vernacular device by Nader, in ‘Tempus und Modus im *Beowulf*,’ 542–63 and 444–99. See further Mitchell, ‘Five Notes on Old English Syntax,’ 78–81; ‘*The Dream of the Rood* Repunctuated,’ 145–9; *On Old English*, 101–3 and 183; Stanley, in ‘The Narrative Art of *Beowulf*,’ 59. More recently, in ‘`K, Chiefly in *Beowulf*,’ 181–207, Stanley casts doubt on apo koinou as a vernacular rhetorical device, but see now Mitchell’s rejoinder, ‘Apo koinou in Old English Poetry,’ 477–97.
- 63 Mitchell, *On Old English*, 147–8.
- 64 Williams, *Gnomic Poetry in Anglo-Saxon*, 3; Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature*, I, 377–8; Henry, *Early English and Celtic Lyric*, 91–132; Hansen, ‘Hrothgar’s “Sermon” in *Beowulf* as Parental Wisdom,’ 55. See further Burlin, ‘Gnomic Indirection in *Beowulf*,’ 41–9; Schaefer, *Vokalität*, 178–230; Cavill,

'*Beowulf* and *Andreas*: Two Maxims,' 479–87. On the wider use of gnomic sayings in Germanic literature, see idem, *Maxims in Old English Poetry*, 25–40; on their use in Old Norse, see Larrington, *A Store of Common Sense*, esp. 161–224.

- 65 For definitions of hypermetricity, see Bliss, *Old English Metre*, 25–8; idem, 'The Origin and Structure of the Old English Hypermetric Line,' 242–8; and see now Bredehoft, *Early English Metre*, 52–6, for a discussion of hypermetric rules, within a larger survey at 51–62. On hypermetricity in the *Dream of the Rood*, see Stevick, 'The Meter of the *Dream of the Rood*,' 149–68; Greenfield, *A Critical History of Old English Literature*, 165–6; Hieatt, 'A New Theory of Triple Rhythm in the Hypermetric Lines of Old English Verse,' 1–8; and on hypermetricity in *Judith*, see Griffith, ed., *Judith*, 34–7. Raffel considers hypermetricity as a rhetorical device in '*Judith*: Hypermetricity and Rhetoric,' 126–33.
- 66 Hieatt, 'The Harrowing of Mermedonia,' 59–60.

3. The Figure of *The Phoenix*

- 1 *The Phoenix* is preserved on folios 55b–65b of the Exeter Book. For discussion of the script, see Flower, *et al.*, ed., *The Exeter Book*, 83–90. All references are to Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*.
- 2 Squires, ed., *The Old English Physiologus*, 47–101; Cook, ed., *Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus*, 123, note to line 659.
- 3 Kemble, 'On Anglo-Saxon Runes,' 360–1; Gaebler, 'Über die Autorschaft,' 488–526; Das, *Cynewulf*, 231–2; Schaar, *Critical Studies*, 111–12 and 326. Fulk, in 'Cynewulf,' 6–7, has recently rejected *The Phoenix* from the Cynewulf canon on metrical grounds. But see now Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf,' 283–7 and 294, for evidence that the *Phoenix*-poet knew Cynewulf's work and drew from it.
- 4 On the phoenix legend, see Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*, 8–13; Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenixe*, 12–30.
- 5 This connection was first noted by Conybeare, in *Illustrations*, 224.

- 6 Gaebler, in 'Über die Autorschaft,' 516–26, showed that this part is influenced by a commentary on Job formerly attributed to Bede, and now to Philip the Presbyter, printed in Cook, ed., *Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus*, 121–2. Another source is Ambrose's *Hexameron*, in Schenkl, ed., *Hexameron*, V, xxiii, 79–80, at 197–8, and reprinted in Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*, Appendix I, 96–7. For further discussion of sources, see ASPR, III, xxxv; Emerson, 'Originality in Old English Poetry,' 18–31.
- 7 Stanley, 'Old English Poetic Diction,' 417.
- 8 For editions of *De aue phoenice*, see Brandt and Laubmann, ed., *L. Caeli Firmiani Lactanti Opera Omnia, Pars II*, 135–47; Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenix*. All references to *De aue phoenice* are to Riese's edition, which is reprinted in Appendix I of Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*, 92–6.
- 9 See Jerome's brief biography of Lactantius in his *Liber de uiris illustribus*, 80 (PL 23, 725–6), and his *Interpretatio chronicae Eusebii Pamphili*, 2333 (PL 27, 670). See also Brandt's biography, in *Über das Leben des Lactantius*. Cf. Seeck, in *Geschichte des Untergangs der Antiken Welt*, 1, 456–60; Altaner, *Patrologie*, 164; and Stevenson, 'Life and Literary Activity,' 661–77.
- 10 Jerome, *Epistula* LVIII, x (CSEL 54, 539).
- 11 Petrarch, *De otio religiosorum*, II, in *Opera*, at 363.
- 12 Pico della Mirandola, *Opera Omnia*, II, i, 7, at 21.
- 13 On Lactantius's engagement with pagan thinkers and poets, see Hagen-dahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, 48–88.
- 14 *Diuinae institutiones*, I, i, 10: *causam ueritatis peroremus*. All references to the *Diuinae institutiones* are to Brandt and Laubmann, ed., *L. Caeli Firmiani Lactanti Opera Omnia, Pars I*. On the rhetorical genre of the 'institute,' see Digeser, *The Making of a Christian Empire*, 9–15.
- 15 For the similar sentiment in Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*, see above, p. 17.
- 16 *Diuinae institutiones*, V, i, 15–16. See further Norden,

Kunstprosa, 512–16; Labriolle, *Histoire de la littérature chrétienne*, 20–2; Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 473–7.

- 17 *Diuinae institutiones*, I, xi, 34: *Vera sunt ergo quae loquuntur poetae, sed obtentu aliquo specieque uelata.*
- 18 *Epitome*, XI, in Brandt and Laubmann, ed., *Caeli Firmiani Lactanti Opera Omnia*, at 683–4. On idea that the letter veils the spiritual sense of the Bible, see also de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, II.2, at 106–23, Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, esp. 1.
- 19 For an overview of patristic discussion of allegory (especially Augustine's) and grammatical definitions of allegory and its various species, see Rollinson, *Classical Theories of Allegory and Christian Culture*. On allegory as part of grammatical exegesis (*enarratio*), see Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 126–60 (with reference to the 'allegorizers' Servius, Macrobius, and Fulgentius).
- 20 Lapidge, *ASL*, 231. Lapidge notes, *ASL*, 319, that two eleventh-century manuscripts of *De aue phoenice* survive from Anglo-Saxon England: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. F. 2. 14, and Cambridge, University Library, Gg. 5. 35. On the latter as a manuscript reflecting teaching practice, see Rigg and Wieland, 'A Canterbury Classbook of the Mid-Eleventh Century,' 113–30; Wieland, 'The Glossed Manuscript: Classbook or Library Book?' 153–73.
- 21 Brandt includes the *De aue phoenice* in his edition of Lactantius's collected works, as does Altaner in his updated list, in *Patrologie*, 165, and Dekkers and Gaar, in *Clauis Patrum Latinorum*, item 90, 26. For discussion of Lactantius's authorship, see Dechent, in 'Über die Echtheit des Phoenix von Lactantius,' 39–55; Riese, 'Über den Phönix des Lactantius,' 446–52; Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenice*, 31–7.
- 22 *Index auctorum* in Brandt, ed., *L. Caeli Firmiani Lactanti Opera Omnia*, II, at 241–78. On Lactantius's first-hand knowledge of Ovid and Vergil, among other poets, see Ogilvie, *The Library of Lactantius*; and Lapidge, *ASL*, 99–100. For instance, the paronomasia (*paret ... parens*, lines 33–4), suggesting one

should 'obey' one's 'parent,' is inspired by the same paronomasia in *Aeneid*, II, lines 606–7.

- 23 *Diuinae Institutiones*, I, xi, 24.
- 24 Patristic authors who mention the phoenix are listed in Fitzpatrick, ed., *Lactanti De Ave Phoenix*, 12–15. See also Fontaine, *Naissance de la poésie*, 57, 64, and 66.
- 25 The doctrine is derived ultimately from II Peter 3.8. On chiliastic teaching in *Diuinae Institutiones*, see Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 37–40.
- 26 Genesis 2.6; John 4.11–14; 7.38–9.
- 27 Fontaine, *Naissance de la poésie*, 6.
- 28 *Metamorphoses*, IV, line 378; XV, lines 170–2; *Diuinae Institutiones* III, xix, 10; VII, xii, 15. See further Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenix*, 90; Fontaine, *Naissance de la poésie*, 65, note 80.
- 29 All translations of *De ave phoenix* are from Calder and Allen, *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry*, at 114–18.
- 30 Fontaine, *Naissance de la poésie*, 56.
- 31 *Diuinae Institutiones*, I, xi, 24; I, xi, 30. This allegorical aim has roots in Stoic theories of poetic sublimity and poetry's unique ability to convey higher truths. See Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 34–9.
- 32 *Diuinae Institutiones*, VI, xxi, 4: *Carmen ... compositum et oratio cum suaui-tate decurrens capit mentes et quo uoluerit impellit*.
- 33 On those scholars who have doubted Lactantius's authorship, largely owing to the poem's pagan elements, see Cook, ed., *Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus*, xxxiii–xxxviii; Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenix*, 31–7.
- 34 On the grammarians' allegorical exegesis of Latin poets, see Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 118–61.
- 35 Lapidge, 'Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*,' 351.
- 36 Letson, 'The Form of the Old English Homily,' 403–4 and 412–14; Randle, 'The Homiletic Context of the Vercelli Book Poems,' 7–11.

- 37 Cynewulf also paraphrases Job (28.7) in *Christ II*, lines 633–58, as support for his allegory. See also the account of the phoenix in the Latin *Physiologus*, in Carmody, ed., *Physiologus Latinus*, 20–1, which depends on John 10.18, Matthew 5.17 and 13.52.
- 38 Lines 552–69. The citation is based on Job 29.18: *dicebamque in nidulo meo moriar et sicut palma multiplicabo dies* ('then I said, I shall die in my nest and multiply my days like the palm'), and it has clearly been inspired by the version of these lines in the Septuagint. The commentator on this passage probably mistakes 'palm' for 'phoenix' because the Septuagint reading, *ὡς στελεχος φοινίκος*, ('stump of a palm'), refers to *φοινίξ*, which in Greek means both 'palm' and 'phoenix.' Both Lactantius (lines 69–70) and the *Phoenix*-poet (lines 171–4) refer to this double meaning.
- 39 On the topos of the lying poet in Christian Latin literature, see Springer, *The Gospel as Epic in Late Antiquity*, 16, note 71. For a general discussion of the concept of inspiration in Christian Latin and vernacular literature, see Ziolkowski, 'Classical Influences on Views of Inspiration,' especially 23–9.
- 40 Sedgefield, ed., *King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius*, XXXV, vii, at 101: *Ne fo we no on ða bisna and on ða bispel for ðara leasena spella lufan, ac forðæmðe we woldon mid gebecnan þa soðfæstnesse, and woldon ðæt hit wurde to nytte ðam geherendum.*
- 41 On the *locus amoenus* topos, and its association with ecphrasis, see Curtius, *European Literature*, 192–200. The use of the topos in *De aue phoenice* is discussed by Stock, in 'Cosmology and Rhetoric in *The Phoenix* of Lactantius,' 249–50.
- 42 On the Golden Age, see Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition*, 114–20.
- 43 Parks, 'The Traditional Narrator and the "I heard" Formulas in Old English Poetry,' 45–66; and see his appendix, 63–6, for the formula's distribution. On the 'rhetoric of beginnings,' see also Foley, *Immanent Art*, 214–23. Cf. the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*: *ik gihorta ðat seggen* ('I have heard it told,' line

1); and the Old Norse *Voluspá*: *Hlióðs bið ek* ('I ask for hearing,' line 1), in Dronke, ed., *Poetic Edda: Vol. 1, The Heroic Poems*, 105 and 155.

- 44 For other highly patterned openings, see, for example, *Genesis A* (*weard / ... wereda ... wordum*, lines 1–2); *Daniel* (*cyningdom ... gecynde*, line 3).
- 45 Six out of these ten lines show double alliteration (2, 3, 6, 7, 9, and 10). Hutcheson, in *Old English Poetic Metre*, Appendix A, 271, notes that 63 percent of lines in *The Phoenix* show double alliteration. Only *The Rune Poem*, *The Wanderer*, and *The Leiden Riddle* – substantially shorter poems – show a higher alliterative density.
- 46 Genesis 2.8. See further Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition*, 115–42; Patch, *The Other World according to Descriptions in Medieval Literature*, 134–46.
- 47 Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenixe*, 58, notes that line 1 recalls *Metamorphoses*, II, line 195.
- 48 On the meaning of *neorxnawang*, see Kabir, *Paradise, Death and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon Literature*, 143–7.
- 49 Ibid., 23–30, and 38–43. On the patristic background, see Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, esp. 131–2 (for Origen's view) and 150–3 (for Cyprian's view).
- 50 Fontaine, *Naissance de la poésie*, 62. Ennius, *Epigrams*, III, line 10: *mi soli caeli maxima porta patet*. This line is quoted verbatim in *Diuinae institutiones*, I, xviii, 11. Line 2 also recalls *Metamorphoses*, II, lines 111–60, and line 6 echoes *Georgics*, II, line 391. See further Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenixe*, 60–1.
- 51 See, for example, *Metamorphoses*, I, lines 101–2; *Eclogues*, IV, lines 26–41; *De rerum Natura*, V, lines 933–42.
- 52 Curtius, *European Literature*, 159–60. On antithesis, see Mitchell, *Old English Syntax*, I, esp. at 1752–72, 720–7; Quirk, *Concessive Relation*, 52–4. See also Mandel, 'Contrast in Old English Poetry.'
- 53 Patch, *Other World*, 12–18.

- 54 Cook, ed., *Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus*, liv–lvi.
- 55 Lines 15–20 recall *Aeneid*, VI, lines 274–81. Cf. Statius, *Thebaid*, VII, lines 47–55; Cicero, *De natura deorum*, III, xvii, 44. *Aegra senectus* (line 15) recalls *Metamorphoses*, III, line 347; *mors crudelis* (line 16) recalls *Aeneid*, X, line 386. On these echoes, see Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De Ave Phoenixe*, 63.
- 56 The manuscript reading for line 64a is *foldwylmum*, and Blake preserves the manuscript reading in his edition. However, see his note (to line 64, at 72) that most editors accept Grein's emendation to *flodwylmum*, thereby strengthening the tmesis.
- 57 On Anglo-Saxon England weather conditions, see Neville, *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry*, 3–7.
- 58 *Daniel*, line 378a. Cf. *Genesis B* (lines 805–15); *Andreas* (lines 1255b–1262a); *The Wanderer* (*wintres woma*, line 103a); *The Seafarer* (lines 8b–17).
- 59 Neville, *Representations of the Natural World*, 38, note 80.
- 60 Morris, ed., *The Blickling Homilies*, vi–vii; Brown, 'Beowulf and the Blickling Homilies and Some Textual Notes,' 908; Chadwick, 'The Monsters and Beowulf,' 171–203; Clemoes, 'Style as a Criterion for Dating the Composition of *Beowulf*,' 181; Collins, 'Blickling Homily XVI and the Dating of *Beowulf*,' 61–9. The connection between Blickling Homily XVI and the *Visio S. Pauli* has most recently been discussed by Wright, in *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature*, 106–9.
- 61 Stanley, 'Old English Poetic Diction,' 441. See further Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 28–30.
- 62 In this case, repeated *þær* is inspired by the *illic* (line 5) and *ibi* (line 21) in the Latin source. On the *þær* syntagm in Old English verse, see Tristram, 'Stock Descriptions of Heaven and Hell in Old English,' 103–7.
- 63 The *Laudes Dei* was certainly known in Anglo-Saxon England, although no manuscripts survive. Lapidge, in *ASL*, 301, notes that the poem was quoted by Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, and Wulfstan of Winchester. Aldhelm's knowledge of Dracontius is described in Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 185–8. For knowledge of Dracontius's works in Anglo-Saxon England, see Manitius, 'Zu

Aldhelm und Baeda,' 623; Moussy and Camus, ed., *Oeuvres*, 103–4; Nodes, 'Blossius Aemelius Dracontius,' in Biggs, Hill, and Szarmach, ed., *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, 82–4.

- 64 *De laudibus Dei*, I, in Moussy and Camus, ed., *Œuvres*, 159–60.
- 65 The *Carmen de spiritalis historiae gestis*, a poem of more than two thousand Latin hexameters spanning six books, was quoted by Aldhelm and Bede, was available in the York library (Lapidge, *ASL*, 179, 204 and 230) and is mentioned in an inventory of the books donated to the monastery at Peterborough by Æthelwold, the tenth-century bishop of Winchester (*ibid.*, 135–6).
- 66 Peiper, ed., *Carmina de spiritalis historiae gestis*, in *Alcimi Ecdicii Aviti, Viennensis Episcopi*, 209.
- 67 Étaix, ed., *Homilae in Euangelia*, II, vii, at 16.
- 68 See Tristram, 'Stock Descriptions,' 107–13.
- 69 Morris, ed., *Blickling Homilies*, V, lines 16–21, at 65. On enumeration in the passage, see Hill, 'The Seven Joys of Heaven in *Christ III* and the Old English Homiletic Texts,' 165–6.
- 70 *Christ III*, lines 1649–4; *Guthlac B*, lines 827b–837; *Judgment Day II*, lines 219–31 and 254–69. Cf. Tristram, 'Stock Descriptions,' 102–13; Pasternack, *Textuality*, 77–89.
- 71 *ASPR*, III, 73.
- 72 Cf. *Andreas*, lines 103–5 and 867–70; *Genesis A*, lines 1922–3a; *Solomon and Saturn*, lines 79–83.
- 73 These lines seem, however, to be loosely based on *De aue phoenice*, lines 19–20.
- 74 Cf. *Judgment Day II* (line 258a), *Christ III* (line 1660b), *Riddle 43* (lines 2b–3), *Guthlac A* (275a), and *Genesis B* (line 802b).
- 75 Cross, 'Conception of the Old English *Phoenix*,' 134.
- 76 For example, the early nineteenth-century critic John Josias Conybeare remarks: '[*The Battle of Maldon*] reads very like a version from one of the military narratives of the *Iliad*, excepting its want of the characteristic similes.' See

Conybeare, *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, lxxxviii. Similar views are expressed in Gummere, *Anglo-Saxon Metaphor*, 11; Hoffmann, 'Der bildliche Ausdruck,' 164–5. On similes in classical verse, see Moulton, *Similes in the Homeric Poems*; Lyne, *Words and the Poet*, 63–99.

77 See p. 63.

78 Cf. Stanley, 'Poetic Diction,' 414–17.

79 Cf. Tertullian, *De resurrectione*, XIII (PL 2, 811); Commodian, *Carmen apologeticum*, lines 139–40, in Dombart, ed., *Commodiani Carmina*, 124; Venantius Fortunatus, *Carmen* XV, line 52, in Leo, ed., *Venanti Honori Clementiani Fortunati Presbyteri Italici Opera Poetica*, 17.

80 These prophetic words are later fulfilled in the vision of heaven, where the blessed are said to dwell with Christ eternally, 'like the phoenix' (*swa se fugel fenix*, line 597a).

81 Song of Songs 2.3. See Kantrowitz, 'The Anglo-Saxon *Phoenix* and Tradition,' 9–10.

82 See further Breeze, 'Æpplede Gold in *Juliana*, *Elene*, and *The Phoenix*,' 452–3; Thompson, 'Æpplede Gold: An Investigation of its Semantic Field,' 318–27.

83 Lindsay, ed., *Etymologiarum siue originum*, VII, ii, 44. Ambrose, *Hexameron* (PL 14, 252). See Clement of Rome's commentary on I Corinthians (PG I, 261–6). See further Kantrowitz, 'The Anglo-Saxon *Phoenix* and Tradition,' 1–13; Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*, 11 and 77, note to line 232.

84 Herodotus, *Histories*, II, 73.

85 See Arator's explanation of the eagle as a bird which is said to renew its youth through the heat of the sun, and then to dive thrice in a cleansing font, in McKinlay, ed., *De Actibus Apostolorum*, II, 106, lines 529–46. On the interpretation of *aquila*, see too Lindsay, ed., *Etymologiarum siue originum*, VII, ii, 44. Cf. the account of the eagle in the Latin *Physiologus*, in Carmody, ed., *Physiologus Latinus*, 19. Cynewulf alludes to the exemplum of *aquila* during the exegesis of the ascension in *Christ II*, lines 645–6.

86 *Metamorphoses*, XV, lines 372–4. See Fitzpatrick, *Lactanti De*

Ave Phoenixe, 81, note to line 107. I have translated *agrestes tineae* as ‘silkworms,’ instead of Calder and Allen’s ‘country chrysalids’ (*Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry*, 116).

87 Matthew 13.24–30.

88 For other instances of this formula, see *Andreas*, line 1243; *Elene*, line 1309a; *Guthlac A*, line 515a.

89 For a list of patristic writings that employ the seed-grain analogy, see Cook, ed., *Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus*, 115, note 243. See too the index, s.v. *figurae agrestes*, in McKinlay, ed., *De Actibus Apostolorum*, 182–3, for agricultural imagery in Arator (‘ploughman’).

90 Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*, 78, note to line 242. See Clement of Rome’s commentary on I Corinthians, XXIV–XXV, in PG I, 261–6; Tertullian, *De resurrectione*, XII–XIII (PL 2, 810–11).

91 *De laudibus Dei*, I, in Moussy and Camus, ed., *Œuvres*, 184–6. While the translation of lines 625–35 and 653–7 is my own, it has benefited from Carolinne White’s rendering, in her *Early Christian Latin Poets*, 146–7.

92 Était, ed., *Homilae in Euangelia*, XXVI, xiii, at 228. Cf. Ezekiel 37.1–14.

93 Roberts, ed., *The Guthlac Poems of the Exeter Book*, 35–6.

94 *The Phoenix* cannot have been composed after 990, the latest dating of the Exeter Book manuscript. See Blake, ed., *Phoenix*, 23–4. Ælfric’s homily was composed between 1002–1005.

95 Clemoes, ed., *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies*, XVI, Appendix B, 533–5. On Gregory as a source for this passage, see *Fontes*, record C.B.1.1.18.015.01, contributor Malcolm Godden.

96 Cf. *Maxims II*, in ASPR, VI, lines 5–9, 55.

97 No fewer than twelve of the eighteen full alliterative lines in the passage exhibit double alliteration – a higher proportion than the poem’s average strike rate of 63 per cent.

98 The intralinear pattern of cross alliteration (ABAB, where A and B signify alliterating stressed syllables) is defined by Orchard, in ‘Artful Alliteration,’ 431.

99 All are rare, all occur exclusively in poetry, and one,

wintergewædum, is a hapax legomenon.

- 100 On this thematic similarity, see Brodeur, 'Three Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poems,' 103. Frank notes that this passage is not derived from any known Latin sources, in 'North-Sea Soundings in *Andreas*,' 7 and note 19.
- 101 On the link between *hildstapan* ('battle-marchers,' or 'battle-stalkers') and skaldic imagery linking weather and battle, see Frank, 'North-Sea Soundings in *Andreas*,' 7.
- 102 Klaeber, in 'Aeneis und Beowulf,' 348, suggests that the sword melting like ice might allude to Turnus's sword, which 'shattered ... like brittle ice' (*glacies ceu futilis ... / dissiluit*, *Aeneid*, XII, lines 740–1). This point is noted in Orchard's discussion of the passage in *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 135–6 and 139–40.
- 103 On the compounds in *Beowulf*, see Clemoes, *Interactions*, 508–9.
- 104 Similes hinging on *swa* link the narrative and allegory in *The Panther* (lines 55a and 69a) and in *The Whale* (lines 31b and 62b), and are ultimately derived from the similes (introduced by *sic*) in the Latin *Physiologus*, in Carmody, ed., *Physiologus Latinus*, 41–2 and 44–5.
- 105 See p. 37, note 17.
- 106 On the history of this device, see Gallo, ed., *The Poetria Nova and Its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine*, 182–7. Chaucer's use of the device is described in Kiernan, 'The Art of the Descending Catalogue, and a Fresh Look at Alison,' 1–16.
- 107 Images of heaven are discussed in Kabir, *Paradise, Death and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon Literature*, 147–50. On the legendary Weland, see Gillespie, *A Catalogue of Persons Named in German Heroic Literature*, s.v. 'Wieland,' 141–3; Orchard, *Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend*, s.v. *Völund*. For references to Weland in Old English poetry, see *Deor*, lines 1–6; *Waldere I*, line 2; *Waldere II*, line 9; *Beowulf*, line 455; *Metres of Boethius*, 10, lines 33, 35 and 42.
- 108 *Elene*, lines 1308b–1312a: *hie asodene beoð, / asundrod fram synnum, swa smæte gold / þæt in wylme bið womma gehwylces /*

þurh ofnes fyr eall geclænsod, / amered ond gemylted. Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene*, 75, notes that this simile is a patristic commonplace and is based ultimately on Proverbs 17.3.

- 109 *Phoenix*, lines 504a–508a: *þonne fyr briceð / læne londwelan, lig eal þigeð / eorðan æhtgestreon, æpplede gold / gifre forgripeð, grædig swelgeð / londes frætwæ.*
- 110 There are numerous other examples of echoic repetition between the poem's halves. For example: *onbryrðed breostsefa* (line 126a) and *breostum onbryrðed* (line 550a); *æfter swylthwile* (lines 350b and 566a); *of greote* ('from the dust,' lines 267b and 624a); *banfæt gebrocen ond se bryne sweþrað* (line 229) and *in banfatu þonne bryne stigeð* ('into their bone-caskets, when the burning rises,' line 520); *gegædrað / ban* ('gathers bones,' lines 269b–270a and 512b). For detailed discussions of the thematic role of echoic repetition in *Genesis A*, see Battles, 'Art of the Scop,' 214–15; and in *Beowulf*, see Orchard, *A Critical Companion to 'Beowulf'*, 64–6.
- 111 On the use of formulas in this passage, see Benson, 'Literary Character,' 336–7; Renoir, *Key to Old Poems*, 56; Campbell, 'Learned Rhetoric,' 194. *Sedibus altis* is employed as a hexameter ending in Aldhelm's Preface to his *Carmen de uirginitate*, in Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 350, line 4; in Alcuin's *Ymnus de sancto Vedasto*, in Dümmler, ed., *Alcuini Carmina*, 313, stanza 7; in Aediluulf's *De abbatibus*, in Campbell, ed., *Æthelwulf: De Abbatibus*, line 338, at 29. *Laude perenni* is a hexameter ending in Aldhelm's Preface to *Carmen de uirginitate*, in Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 351, line 9, and in Alcuin's *Ymnus de sancto uedasto*, in Dümmler, ed., *Alcuini Carmina*, 313, stanza 10. *Sine fine* is a hexameter ending in Sedulius Scottus' *De aue phoenice*, in Traube, ed., *Sedulii Scotti Carmina*, 159, stanza 10, line 20. On emendations to the macaronic, especially to 'alma letitie,' see Blake, ed., *The Phoenix*, 86–7; ASPR III, 279–80.
- 112 On similar movements from *her* to *þær* in *The Wanderer*, *The Dream of the Rood*, and vernacular homilies, see Orchard, 'Re-Reading *The Wanderer*: The Value of Cross References,' 12–15 and 24–5.
- 113 Pasternack, *Textuality*, 71.

4. A Dead End? *Judgment Day II*

- 1 All references to the poem are to Caie, ed., *The Old English Poem 'Judgement Day II'* (and to his line-numbers). I have also consulted Lumby, ed. *Be Domes Dæge*.
- 2 Fulk, in *A History of Old English Meter*, 262–4, argues that alliterative irregularities, metrical faults, and the presence of rhyme point to a date ‘no earlier than the second half of the tenth century’ (at 264). For a similarly late dating, see also ASPR, VI, lxxii; Caie, ed., *Judgement Day II*, 10.
- 3 Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, 82–91, item 49; James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge*, 485–91; Whitbread, ‘CCCC 201,’ 106–12; Caie, ed., *Judgement Day II*, 1–21 and 45–8; idem, ‘Codicological Clues: Reading Old English Christian Poetry in its Manuscript Context,’ esp. 6–7.
- 4 Orchard, ‘Crying Wolf,’ 240–59.
- 5 On Napier XXIX, see Becher, *Wulfstans Homilien*, 65–7; Jost, *Wulfstanstudien*, 203–8; Whitbread, “‘Wulfstan’ Homilies XXIX, XXX, and some Related Texts,’ 348–53. The intimate relationship between the poems in CCCC 201 and homilies is also evident from the ‘prose dilution’ of *Exhortation to Christian Living* – the poem that immediately follows *Judgment Day II* in CCCC 201 – in part of Vercelli II and Napier XXX. See Scragg, ed., *Vercelli Homilies*, 348; Wright, ‘Vercelli Homily XXI,’ 252–3.
- 6 Most scholars agree that the homily quotes lines 92b–267, 270a, and 285 from the poem. Cf. Löhe, ed., *Be Domes Dæg*, 47–52; Napier, ed., *Wulfstan*, viii; Jost, *Wulfstanstudien*, 206; ASPR, VI, lxxii; Whitbread, ‘Old English Poem *Judgment Day II*,’ 637 and 646. A different view is that of Stanley, ‘Prosaic Vocabulary,’ 389–90, and Griffith, ‘Method of Composition,’ 173, who think that both poem and homily are based on a lost prose version of *De die iudicii*. This scenario seems unlikely, however, because *Judgment Day II*’s translation of *De die iudicii* is so close and so consistent, with one hexameter generally translated by two Old English lines.

- 7 For introductions to the soul-and-body theme, see Batiouchkof, 'Le débat de l'âme et du corps,' 1–55 and 511–78; Walther, *Das Streitgedicht in der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*; Boitani and Torti, *The Body and Soul in Medieval Literature*. On the Anglo-Saxon tradition of the soul-and-body theme, see Moffat, *The Old English Soul and Body*, 28–35; idem, ed., *The Soul's Address to the Body: The Worcester Fragments*, 39–51; Di Sciacca, 'The *Ubi Sunt* Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies: Sources and Relationships,' 366–7; Tranter, 'Die Rede der Seele an den Leichnam in der alt- und mittlenglischen Dichtung.' The development of the soul-and-body legend in Middle English verse is discussed by Woolf, in *English Religious Lyrics in the Middle Ages*, esp. [chapters 3](#) and 9. On the medical imagery of salvation, see Arbesmann, 'The Concept of *Christus Medicus* in St Augustine,' 1–28; Hoffman, 'The Theme of *Judgment Day II*,' 161–4.
- 8 See, for example, Orchard, 'Poetic Inspiration and Prosaic Translation,' 404–16; 'Oral Tradition,' 114–17; and 'Enigma Variations: The Anglo-Saxon Riddle-Tradition,' 284–304.
- 9 Robinson and Caie have shown that *Judgment Day II* is intimately linked in style and theme to the verse that follows it in CCCC 201. Robinson, in "'The Rewards of Piety": Two Old English Poems in Their Manuscript Context,' 194–8, argues that *Exhortation to Christian Living* and *A Summons to Prayer* are in fact one poem (which he renames *The Rewards of Piety*), and also highlights the verbal link between the rubric at the end of *Judgment Day II*, and the second line of *Exhortation* (ibid., at 199, note 7). Caie also discusses the connections between the verse of CCCC 201 in his introduction to his edition, *The Old English Poem Judgement Day II*; idem, 'Text and Context in Editing Old English,' 155–62.
- 10 For an overview of the question of the borders between poetry and prose, see Wright, 'More Old English Poetry in Vercelli Homily XXI,' 245–53.
- 11 McIntosh, in 'Wulfstan's Prose,' 110, describes 'debased' verse as that which is structured by alliteration or rhyme or both,

but with a weakened metrical technique, citing the poems from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. See also Momma, *The Composition of Old English Poetry*, 13–14. On the inclusion of prosaic words in poetry as a symptom of decay, see Griffith, ‘Poetic language and the Paris Psalter: The Decay of the Old English Tradition,’ 167–86.

- 12 All citations from the poem are from Fraipont’s edition, in Bede’s *Opera Rhythmica*, 439–44. All translations of *De die iudicii* are from Calder and Allen, *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry*, at 208–12.
- 13 Whitbread lists thirty-nine manuscripts, in ‘The Old English Poem *Judgment Day II* and Its Latin source,’ 651–5. In a preliminary report to the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists (at the University of Notre Dame, September 2000), Patrizia Lendinara increased the number to forty-one.
- 14 Lendinara, ‘Alcuino e il *De die iudicii*,’ 306–7.
- 15 Whitbread, in ‘After Bede: The Influence and Dissemination of his Doomsday Verses,’ 250–66. One might also note Aediluulf’s echoing of *De die iudicii* (*quae trahit alma dei genetrix pia uirgo Maria, De die iudicii*, line 148; *a dextris uirgo et genetrix astare uideri, Carmen de abbatibus*, line 204).
- 16 Arnold, ed., *Simeonis monachi opera omnia*, 23–7. On Byrhtferth’s authorship, see Lapidge, ‘Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the Early Sections of the *Historia Regum*,’ 317–42 and 333–4.
- 17 Giles, ed., ‘*Vita S. Ecgwini*,’ in *Vita Quorundum Anglo-Saxonum*, 349–96. On Byrhtferth’s authorship of this Saint’s Life, see Lapidge, ‘Byrhtferth and the *Vita S. Ecgwini*,’ 293–315.
- 18 Both prayer and poem appear under Alcuin’s name in Froben’s 1777 edition, *Alcuini Opera*, II, ii, at 616–19. On this attribution, see Lumby, ed., *Be Domes Dæge*, vi. On its rejection, and the argument for Bede’s authorship, see Whitbread, ‘Bede’s *Versus De Die Iudicii*,’ 198–9; ‘After Bede,’ 251–2. Recently, in ‘Bede and the *Versus de die iudicii*,’ 103–11, Michael Lapidge restates the case for Bede’s authorship (mainly by showing that *De die iudicii* makes use of Bede’s favourite hexameter patterns). The poem has also been

attributed to the Carolingian poet and theologian, Paschasius Radbertus. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century editors of Paschasius Radbertus's poetry included *De die iudicii* in their editions, because of the parallels between the poem and Paschasius' works. On Paschasius as imitator rather than author, see Manitius, *Geschichte* I, 86; Lendinara, 'Alcuino e il *De die iudicii*,' 307, note 20.

19 *HE* V, 24.

20 Twenty-eight out of the forty-one manuscripts contain rubrics that assign the poem to Bede. See Whitbread, 'The Old English Poem *Judgment Day II* and its Latin source,' 651–5; Lapidge, 'Bede and the *Versus de die iudicii*,' 104.

21 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 139, fols. 57–58v (saec. xii; Sawley, Yorks); Whitbread, 'The Old English Poem *Judgment Day II*,' 653, Group III, no. 5. On Byrhtferth's knowledge of Bede, see Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the Early Sections of the *Historia Regum*,' 328–9 and 333.

22 Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 123, fols. 72–3 (saec. xi; St Mary's, Ripoll); Whitbread, 'The Old English Poem *Judgment Day II*,' 653, Group I, no. 12.

23 Twenty-three manuscripts contain the dedication to Acca, as does Byrhtferth's transcript of the poem in the *Historia regum*. See Lapidge, 'Bede and the *Versus de die iudicii*,' 104, and the list of manuscripts in Whitbread, 'Old English Poem,' 651–4. See also *ibid.*, 'A Study of Bede's *Versus de die iudicii*,' 193–221; 'After Bede: The Influence and Dissemination of his Doomsday Verses,' 250–66. On Bede's friendship with Acca, see Whitelock, 'Bede and His Teachers and Friends,' 25–7; Laistner, ed., *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum et Retractatio*, 3–5; Lapidge, 'Bede and the *Versus de die iudicii*,' 104–5. On this epilogue as evidence of Bede's authorship, see Manitius, *Geschichte*, I, 86; Whitbread, 'Bede's *Versus de die iudicii*,' 198–207; Fraipont, ed., *Opera Rhythmica*, 439–40; Caie, ed., *Judgement Day II*, 33. Bede's dedications to Acca are discussed in Plummer, ed., *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, I, xlix and cxlvii–cxlix. Words from the dedication (*semper sine fine beatum*, line 157) echo the last line of the poem 'proper' (*semper gaudere beatis*, line 154), and one line (*en, tua iussa*

sequens cecini tibi carmina flendi, line 158), recalls the poem's opening (*carmina praetrusti cecini haec lugubria mente*, line 5). The stylistic consistency of this epilogue can be contrasted to a heavily spondaic nine-line prayer (said by Manitius, in 'Zu Aldhelm und Baeda,' 625, to be indebted to Aldhelm) which appears at the end of the poem in PL 94, 638 (and comes from the lost manuscript on which Giles's and Cassander's editions are based).

- 24 Lapidge, 'Bede the Poet,' 320, note 33. Thornbury, in 'Anglo-Saxon Poetics,' 152, notes that Bede scans some of these words correctly in his *Vita S. Cuthberti*: *iūrē dātās* (line 553); *insignis flūiī ī* (line 93); *dēsī diām* (line 686). In addition, Emily Thornbury has also observed that line 62 (*sis memor illius, qui tum pauor ante tribunal*) does not scan, and that line 147 (*candida uirgineo simul intēr agmina flore*) employs *productio ob caesuram*, a licence which Bede does not condone. Thornbury, 'Anglo-Saxon Poetics,' 152.
- 25 See, for example, Bede's criticism of Sergius, in Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, III, at 88.
- 26 Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, XI, at 113–14. On the golden line in *De die iudicii* and Bede's metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*, see Thornbury, 'Anglo-Saxon Poetics,' 147–8. Thornbury also observes, at 150, that *De die iudicii* has a rather low tendency towards initial verb placement, unlike Bede's metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*.
- 27 I count 14 alliterating cadences out of 163 lines (8.59 per cent). Cf. Orchard, *Poetic Art*, Appendix 5.2, 295, where the statistic for alliterating cadences in Bede's verse is 3.2 per cent.
- 28 Rob Getz, 'Formulaic Usage in *De die iudicii*.' Paper delivered on 6 May 2004 at the 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo. I am extremely grateful to Rob Getz for allowing me to quote from this paper.
- 29 Wright, in 'The Metrical Art(s) of Bede,' 153–60, studies the modifications to the early draft of the verse Life of Cuthbert and concludes that Bede's mastery of metre in fact improved over the years.

- 30 See Lumby, ed., *Be Domes Dæge*, vi; and on its rejection, see Whitbread, 'Bede's *Versus De Die Iudicii*,' 198–9; 'After Bede,' 251–2.
- 31 See Lendinara, in 'Alcuino e il *De die iudicii*,' 307–19.
- 32 Orchard, 'Wish You Were Here,' 25–7. See also Lendinara, 'Alcuino e il *De die iudicii*,' 312–14. I am grateful to Rob Getz for drawing attention to this point.
- 33 On the influence of these poets on Alcuin's York writings, see Lapidge, *ASL*, 231–3. By contrast, there are only three quotations from Dracontius in the verse Life of St Cuthbert (*ASL*, 207)
- 34 Bullough, *Alcuin*, 336–46.
- 35 On this point, see Whitbread, 'Old English Poem,' 655.
- 36 The rubric is printed in Caie, ed., *Judgement Day II*, 84.
- 37 Bullough, *Alcuin*, 287. One example of Alcuin's indebtedness to Bede is the classical allusion in *De die iudicii* to Titan as a metonym for the sun, which is also found in Bede's *De natura rerum* and *De arte metrica*. Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, VI, at 103; *De natura rerum* (PL, 94, 276).
- 38 Alcuin's argues in his *De rhetorica* that *elocutio* ('style') should be 'eloquent' and 'clear' (*facunda ... aperta*) and the words used should be 'appropriate and usual' (*propriis uerbis et usitatis sine ambiguo*). See Howell, ed., *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne*, at 132, lines 994–9.
- 39 Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, XI, at 111–16: *gratissima, pulcherrima, optima*.
- 40 SDSS (line 1); DSDD (line 2); DDSS (line 3); SDSS (line 4); DSDD (line 5, where S = sponde and D = dactyl). See Bede's recommendation of metrical variety, in Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, XI, at 113–4.
- 41 Kendall, ed., *De arte metrica*, XI, at 111.
- 42 Ibid., at 114.
- 43 Ibid., at 113: *optima ... uersus dactylici ac pulcherrima est positio*.

- 44 On the literary significance of the ‘grove,’ see Curtius, *European Literature*, 194–5.
- 45 *De die iudicii*, lines 3–5: *maestus sub tegmine solus / ... cecini = Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi* (*Eclogue* 1, line 1); cf. the last line of the *Georgics*: *Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi* (*Georgics* IV, line 566).
- 46 *Georgics* IV, lines 271–3: *flos ... herba ... de caespite siluam*.
- 47 *Aeneid*, XI, line 5. Whitbread, ‘The Sources and Literary Qualities of Bede’s Doomsday Verses,’ 266.
- 48 *Aeneid*, VI, line 473. This allusion to *Aeneid*, Book VI, is strengthened by the later reference to the sun as Titan (*De die iudicii*, line 54). Cf. *Titaniaque astra*, VI, line 725.
- 49 See, for example, Bede’s comment in *In Lucae Euangelium Expositio*, IV, xv, 16, at 289: *Siliquae quibus porcos pascebat sunt doctrinae saeculares, sterili suauitate resonantes* (‘pagan letters are the husks with which the swine are fed, resounding in sterile sweetness’). For Alcuin’s declared hostility to classical literature, see Wieland, ‘Alcuin’s Ambiguous Attitude Towards the Classics,’ 84–5.
- 50 Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, LI, line 1, 119. Orchard, *Poetic Art*, Appendix 5.1, at 287. On Bede’s debt to Aldhelm, see Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 254–60.
- 51 Aldhelm recommends *floriger* in his ‘De pedum regulis,’ CXX (under ‘the Dactyl’), in Ehwald, *Aldhelmi Opera*, 165. For Alcuin’s use of *floriger*, see, for example, his *Carmen* XXIV lines 6 and 17, and *O mea cella*, line 4.
- 52 Huemer, ed., *Carmen paschale*, II, lines 1–3, in *Sedulii Opera Omnia: Expulerat primogenitum saeuissimus anguis / Florigera de sede uirum bland-ique saporis / Inlecebris letum misero portarat amarum* (‘the most cruel serpent had expelled the first-born man from the flowery abode, and with the enticements of alluring savour brought bitter death to the wretched man’). Cf. *De die iudicii*: *florigeras* (line 1); *sedi ... amaro* (line 4). Whitbread, in ‘The Sources and Literary Qualities of Bede’s Doomsday Verses,’ 259, note 3, and 265, notes that *floriger* also echoes the later Christian poet Venantius Fortunatus (Leo, ed., *Venantii Fortunati Carmina*, III, ix, line 1, 59; cf.

igniuomum in Carmen III, line 3 and *igniuomus*, *De die iudicii*, line 82. Liber IIII Ezrae, 9.26: *et profectus sum ... in campum quod uocatur Ardat, et sedi ibi in floribus et de herbis agri ...* ('and I set out ... into a plain which is called Ardat, and I sat there amid the flowers and herbs of the field ...').

- 53 Lendinara, 'Alcuino e il *De die iudicii*,' 310–11. *O mea cella* is Carmen XXIII in Dümmler, ed., *Alcuini Carmina*, at 243–4. For a translation, see Orchard, 'Wish You Were Here,' 39–40. The most striking verbal parallels are *ramis resonantibus* (XXIII, line 3) and *resonantibus ... ramis* (*De die iudicii*, line 2) and the recurrence of *floriger* (XXIII, line 4; *De die iudicii*, line 1). Cf. Alcuin's evocation of pastoral in Carmen XIV, lines 6–7.
- 54 Orchard, 'Wish You Were Here,' 42. (Quoting Newlands, 'Alcuin's Poem of Exile,' 19–30.)
- 55 Ehwald, ed., *De metris*, in *Aldhelmi Opera*, VIII, at 78: *densa ... Latinitatis silua*.
- 56 See Huemer, ed., *Sedulii Opera Omnia, Carmen paschale*, I, lines 97–8: *siluamque patentem / Ingrediens aliquos nitor contingere ramos* ('entering an open wood, I strive to touch other branches').
- 57 The term 'pathetic fallacy' was coined by John Ruskin, 'Of the Poetic Fallacy,' in *Modern Painters*, III, IV, xii, v, at 160. On the 'pathetic fallacy' in Vergil's *Eclogues*, see Schmidt, *Bukolische Leidenschaft oder über antike Hirtenpoesie*, 116–22. For the pathetic fallacy in vernacular verse (and the use of prepositions and alliteration to suggest the speaker's mood), cf. *The Wife's Lament*, lines 27–41.
- 58 See *Wulf and Eadwacer*, where the pathetic fallacy is depicted through apposition and alliteration: *þonne hit wæs r enig weder ond ic r eotugu sæt* ('when it was rainy weather and I sat weeping,' line 10). Cf. *Maxims II*, where comfort is implied through the suggestion that clouds and woe are fleeting: *Wea bið wundrum clibbor. Wolcnu scriðað* ('Woe is wondrously clingy. Clouds pass,' line 12). See ASPR, VI, 56, and 175, note to line 13.
- 59 Caie, in *Judgment Day Theme*, 104–5, and 143, notes that later in the poem, *sweg* denotes the uproar of Judgment (line

102a); on the meaning of *gryre*, and its echoing in the later reference to the ‘terror of death’ (*deaðes gryre*, line 267b), see 128.

- 60 Note the other connections within *Judgment Day II*: line 6, *innon þam gemonge on ænlicum wonge* = *gemang þam ænlican*, line 283a. Cf. *De die iudicii*, line 1, *inter florigeras* = *Inter apostolicas ... / atque inter roseis splendentia castra triumphis / candida uirgineo simul inter agmina flore*, lines 145–7).
- 61 Parks, ‘The Traditional Narrator and the “I heard” Formulas in Old English Poetry,’ 45–66 and 63–6. Cf. Schaefer, *Vokalität*, 135–61.
- 62 On the *locus amoenus* topos, see Curtius, *European Literature*, 192–200. On the *locus amoenus* and the Golden Age, see Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition*, 114–20.
- 63 *Beowulf*, ed. Klaeber, lxxv. On lack of variation as a feature of vernacular metrical translations of Latin verse, as well as of late Old English compositions, see Griffith, ‘Method of Composition,’ 14. See Scragg, ed., *Battle of Maldon*, 29.
- 64 The traditional habit of metrical variety in Old English verse is discussed by Thornbury, in ‘Anglo-Saxon Poetics,’ 132. On the poem’s metrical faults (including the low incidence of verse types D and E), and on these as evidence of late composition, see Fulk, *Old English Meter*, esp. 262–4.
- 65 On the replacement of alliteration with rhyme in late Old English verse, see Fulk, *Old English Metre*, 263–8. There is no alliteration in seven lines of *Judgment Day II* (42, 152, 169, 190, 203, 252, and 256) and leonine rhyme acts as a substitute for alliteration in another 7 lines (3, 4, 6, 28, 82, 147, and 267). See Scragg, ed., *Battle of Maldon*, 29, on the structural use of rhymes in *The Battle of Maldon*.
- 66 The border between verse and prose has been discussed especially with regard to the Vercelli homilies. Szarmach printed a rhythmic and alliterative description of Doomsday from Vercelli XXI as verse, Scragg printed the corresponding passage from Vercelli II as prose, and Stanley printed as verse a variant form in a sermon in CCC 201 (the manuscript in which *Judgment Day II* is preserved). Wright now claims that a

different passage in Vercelli XXI (and Napier XXX) can be reclassified as verse. For an overview, see Wright, 'More Old English Poetry in Vercelli Homily XXI,' 250–62. For the emphasis on metre as the distinguishing feature between verse and prose, see McIntosh, *Wulfstan's Prose*, 110–19; Clemoes, *Rhythm and Cosmic Order in Old English Christian Literature*, 16–21; Fulk, *Old English Meter*, 267–8; Momma, *The Composition of Old English Poetry*, 8–27; and for the emphasis on style and diction, see Stanley, 'Studies in the Prosaic Vocabulary of Old English Verse,' 385–418; Clemoes, "'Symbolic" Language in Old English Poetry,' 12–13; Campbell, 'Verse Influences in Old English Prose,' 93–8; Frank, 'Poetic Words in Late Old English Prose,' 89–107, esp. 106–7; Richards, 'Prosaic Poetry: Late Old English Poetic Composition,' 65–70.

- 67 See Hollowell, 'On the Two-Stress Theory of Wulfstan's Rhythm,' 1–11.
- 68 Orchard, in 'Crying Wolf: Oral Style and the *Sermones Lupi*,' 239–64, and McIntosh, 'Wulfstan's Prose,' 109, argue that rhyming finite verb-pairs are a feature of Wulfstan's style. On doublets in Old English, see Koskeniemi, *Repetitive Word Pairs*, 11–74.
- 69 Orchard, 'Oral Tradition,' 111–12.
- 70 Whitelock, ed., *Sermo Lupi*, 18.
- 71 On prosaic diction in the poem, see Stanley, in 'Studies in the Prosaic Vocabulary of Old English Verse,' 389; Di Sciacca, 'The *Ubi Sunt* Motif and the Soul-and Body Legend in Old English Homilies,' 378. Based on Griffith's list of poetic words, in 'Poetic language and the Paris Psalter,' Appendix I, 183–5, I count the following poetic words in *Judgment Day II*: *ædre*, *atul*, *bealo*, *brytta*, *earh*, *folde*, *frea*, *gnorn*, *greotan*, *meowle*, *metod*, *nergend*, *sefa*, *swegl*, *þeoden*, *upheofon*, *worn*, *wop*.
- 72 On formulas for God, see Schaefer, *Vokalität*, 107–8.
- 73 Wulfstan's favourite words and phrases are listed in Orchard, 'Crying Wolf,' fig. 5, 246, and see the discussion at 242–50. Note the frequent use of *swiðe* in *Judgment Day* (six times);

swiðlic (twice); *swiðlice*. On *eal* as a favourite intensifier of Wulfstan, see Bethurum, ed., *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, 32. See also Whitelock, ed., *Sermo Lupi*, 17–18. Note also the poet's favouring of forms such as *lagu* ('law,' line 164) instead of *æ*; *gesælig*, *ofersælig*, *gesæligost* (lines 248–9) instead of *eadig*; compounds formed with *þeod-*, as in *þeodcýningas* (line 162b), and *þeodscipum* (line 285b).

- 74 Orchard, 'Crying Wolf,' 245–6 and 249. Note the following *un-*com-pounds in *Judgment Day II*: *unrot*, *unhyrlican*, *undædum*, *ungerydre*, *unrim*, *ungemetum*, *unstenc*, *unrotnes*, *uncyst*, *uncræftiga*, *unalyfed*, *unbleoh*.
- 75 On further stylistic parallels between *Judgment Day II* and Napier XL, cf. Löhe, ed., *Be Domes Dæge*, 40; Stanley, 'Judgement of the Damned,' 374–5.
- 76 On apostrophes in sermons, see Wolfe, 'The Audience of Old English Literature,' esp. 47–97.
- 77 Cf. the frequent use of second-person singular pronouns in *The Rewards of Piety*, as noted by Robinson, in 'The Rewards of Piety,' 199, note 9.
- 78 Löhe, ed., *Be Domes Dæge*, 52.
- 79 Hollis, 'The Thematic Structure of the *Sermo Lupi*,' 180.
- 80 For studies of the soul-and-body theme in Old English homilies, see Dudley, 'An Early Homily on the "Soul and Body" Theme,' 225–53; Willard, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body,' 957–83; idem, *Two Apocrypha in Old English Homilies*. On the soul-and-body theme within the Vercelli Book, see Ó Carragáin, 'How Did the Vercelli Collector Interpret The Dream of the Rood?,' 63–104. The questioning *ubi sunt* motif is set within the context of the soul's address to the body by Di Sciacca, in 'The Ubi Sunt Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies,' 368–74. See also p. 71, note 7.
- 81 On incremental repetition in King Alfred's prose, see Orchard, 'Oral Tradition,' 102. Fowler discusses such patterns of repetition in Wulfstan's homilies, in 'Stylistic Features of the *Sermo Lupi*,' 15–16.

82 *Aeneid*, VI, lines 275–81.

83 See Vergil's alliterative description: *L etumque L abosque: / tum consanguineus L eti Sopor* ('and Death and Distress; next, Death's own brother Sleep,' lines 277–8)

84 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, xiii, at 150: *cum diuersis casibus uariatur oratio*.

85 For example, Genesis 2.16–17: *comede ... comedas ... comederis*; Matthew 13.13–14; *quia uidentes non uident et audientes non audiunt ... auditu audietis ... et uidentes uidebitis et non uidebitis*; Apocalypse 4.2–4: *sedis ... sedem sedens ... sedebat ... sedis ... sedis ... sedentes*.

86 Kendall, ed., *De schematibus et tropis*, I, vii, at 147.

87 On the borrowing from Aldhelm's *Enigma* 100, line 55, see Orchard, *Poetic Art*, Appendix 5.1, 287.

88 Sims-Williams, 'Thought, Word and Deed,' 78–111.

89 On the influence of patristic sources and Irish vision literature on 'thought, word, and deed' in Anglo-Saxon writings, especially in Bede, see Sims-Williams, 'Thought, Word and Deed,' esp. 109–11. Among the many instances of the triad in Alcuin's verse, one might note the closing of *Carmen XIII* (*seruiat ut uobis carmine, corde, manu*, line 10) in Dümmler, ed., *Alcuini (Albini) Carmina*, at 237. The triad is a favourite device of Aediluulf's, and found in his *Carmen de abbatibus* at lines 39, 191, 219, 287, and 797. ('Thought, word, and deed' is not noted by Campbell, in the list of rhetorical devices in the introduction to his edition, at xxxviii–xli).

90 Wright discusses the triad in Napier LVII, in *Irish Tradition*, 79–83. See also Whitelock, ed., *Sermo Lupi*, lines 204–6. For some examples in anonymous homilies, see Scragg, ed., *Vercelli Homilies*, XII, lines 51–3; XVII, lines 85–6 and 135–41; Bazire and Cross, ed., *Eleven Old English Rogation-tide Homilies*, IV, lines 79–80.

91 *Word ond weorc* is discussed by Clemoes, in *Interactions*, 157; Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*, 203–37.

92 The insistence on the triadic structure is a feature of texts with Irish or Hiberno-Latin influence (*þurh þreo þing*,

Rogationtide Homily V; in *prim wisum*, Vercelli Homily V), cf. Wright, *Irish Tradition*, 79–83.

- 93 For paronomasia on *mǣn* ('man') and *mān* ('crime') elsewhere in Old English poetry, see, for example, *Elene*, line 626; *Juliana*, line 459; *Beowulf*, lines 110 and 712; *Solomon and Saturn*, line 148. I count seven instances in the *Paris Psalter*.
- 94 On these echoes, see Hoffman, 'Structure and Symbolism in the *Judgment Day II*,' 172–3.
- 95 Cf. compounds denoting emotional enclosure in *The Wanderer*: *ferðloca*, 'spirit-locker,' lines 13 and 33; *hordcofa*, 'treasure-coffer,' line 14; *breostcofa*, 'breast-coffer,' line 18.

5. Through the Looking-Glass: *Riddles* 35 and 40

- 1 Lapidge, in Lapidge and Rosier, ed., *Aldhelm: The Poetic Works*, 1. See also Lapidge, 'Aldhelm's Latin Poetry and Old English Verse,' 247. All references to the Exeter Book *Riddles* are to ASPR, III, 180–210, and 229–43. For Aldhelm's influence on the Exeter Book *Riddles*, see Tupper, *The Riddles of the Exeter Book*, xxxvii–xliv; Williamson, *The Old English Riddles of the Exeter Book*, 166, 202, 218, 243–8, 255, 265–76, 293, 323, 333, and 339–40.
- 2 All references to the *Enigmata* are to Ehwald, *Aldhelmi Opera*, 97–149. For a list of the thirty-one surviving manuscripts (and manuscript fragments) of the *Enigmata*, see Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly: Aldhelm's Riddles in the British Library MS Royal 12.C.XXIII*, 25–6.
- 3 All references to *The Leiden Riddle* are to Smith, ed., *Three Northumbrian Poems*, 44–6. On the ninth-century manuscript, see Ker, *Catalogue*, Appendix, no. 19, 479; Parkes, 'The Manuscript of the Leiden Riddle,' 207–17; Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 14. Smith, ed., *Three Northumbrian Poems*, 25, argues the author of the *Leiden Riddle* was an Anglo-Saxon scribe at Fleury.
- 4 William of Malmesbury recounts how Aldhelm recited vernacular verse to his flock as they left church after mass (Hamilton, ed., *Gesta pontificum*, V, 190, at 336). See Remley,

‘Aldhelm as Old English Poet: *Exodus*, Asser and the *Dicta Ælfredi*,’ 90–102, where it is also noted that Aldhelm is celebrated as a poet and performer in another twelfth-century work. Lapidge was the first to argue that Aldhelm’s metre and formulaic style points to his accomplishment as an Old English poet, in ‘Aldhelm’s Latin Poetry,’ 255–69. These findings are complemented and developed in Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*, esp. 102–25. Remley, *ibid.*, 92–4, suggests a connection between Aldhelm and the Old English *Exodus*, by showing how verbal parallels and thematic similarities ‘display a congruence ... that seems to betray an Aldhelmian turn of mind’ (at 93).

- 5 Orchard, ‘Enigma Variations: The Anglo-Saxon Riddle-Tradition,’ 1–5. See also Foley’s observation, in ‘How Genres Leak in Traditional Verse,’ 91, that riddles are ‘one of the most focused of genres in Old English poetry.’
- 6 Lapidge, *ASL*, 180–90, notes that the *Enigmata* quote from Horace, Lucan, Lucretius, Ovid, ‘Symposium,’ and above all, Vergil, as well as from Dracontius, Prudentius, Sedulius, and Venantius Fortunatus.
- 7 For an overview of patristic and grammatical definitions of *enigma*, including Augustine, Cassiodorus, Isidore, Gregory the Great, Donatus, and Bede, see Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 60–5.
- 8 Ehwald, ed., *Preface to the Enigmata*, lines 6–9 and 10, 97–8; cf. *Carmen de uirginitate*, line 24, at 353.
- 9 Ehwald, ed., *De metris*, in *Aldhelmi Opera*, VII, at 76–7. Prosopopoeia was one of the progymnasmata, the preliminary rhetorical exercises. See Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* II.i.2. and II.i.8., and Knappe, *Traditionen*, 84.
- 10 Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 478: *tanta rerum arcana examusim non posse intellegi, nisi frequens et prolixa meditatio fuerit adhibita*.
- 11 Smith, ed., *Three Northumbrian Poems*, 37, dates *The Leiden Riddle* to the second half of the eighth century. See also Fulk, *A History of Old English Meter*, 405. On the date of *Riddle 40*, see O’Brien O’Keeffe, ‘The Text of Aldhelm’s *Enigma* No. C in

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson C. 697 and Exeter Riddle 40,' esp. 64–73. See below, page 99.

- 12 All translations of *Enigma* 33 (*Lorica*) and 100 (*Creatura*) are Lapidge's, from Lapidge and Rosier, trans., *Aldhelm: The Poetic Works*, 76 and 92–4.
- 13 Ehwald, ed., *De pedum regulis*, CXX, in *Aldhelmi Opera*, 165. *Setiger* also appears in *Enigmata* 12, line 2; 17, line 2; 33, line 2; 36, line 5; and 39, line 1. On grammars in Anglo-Saxon England that include lists and paradigms for nouns in *-fer* and *-ger*, see Law, *Insular Latin Grammarians*, 55.
- 14 Lines 4–7 are scanned identically (DSSS). There is in fact one error in the scansion, *seāreās* (line 4), probably because the rare word *seāreās* was not familiar to Aldhelm.
- 15 Birt, ed., *Epithalamium Laurentii*, line 41, 406. Orchard, *The Poetic Art*, Appendix 4.1, 231.
- 16 *Aeneid* VII, line 14. Cf. *Georgics* I, line 285; III, line 562.
- 17 *Metamorphoses*, IV, line 275; VI, lines 20 and 54.
- 18 *Eclogue* IV, lines 42–5.
- 19 I Samuel 17.5–7; Isaiah 49.1.
- 20 *De laude Dei*, I, line 63.
- 21 Line 1 = *Enigma* 27, line 1; *Enigma* 44, line 1. Line 4 = *Enigma* 100, lines 59–60; Ehwald, ed., *De metris*, cxxxiii, at 183.
- 22 Ehwald, ed., *De uirginitate*, xxxviii, at 287. Ehwald, ed., *Carmen de uirginitate*, line 67, 355. The poem also inspired later more overtly Christian *Enigmata* by the Anglo-Latin authors, Tatwine and Boniface. Line 1 = Tatwine's *Enigmata* 11, line 1; 31, line 2; 39, line 1. Line 4 = Boniface's *Enigma* 10, lines 20–1 (*De uitii*). For these *Enigmata*, see Marco, ed., *Tatwini Opera Omnia*, 178 (Tatwine) and 198 (Boniface).
- 23 On the pun on *uestis*, see Howe, 'Aldhelm's *Enigmata* and Isidorian Etymologies,' 51–3.
- 24 Romans 13.12; II Cor. 10.4.
- 25 ASPR, VI, 199–201.

- 26 Smith, ed., *Three Northumbrian Poems*, 9 and 44.
- 27 Orchard, 'Enigma Variations,' 4–5.
- 28 *Lorica* line 4 = Old English lines 9–10, and *Lorica* line 5 = Old English line 7–8. In line 4, the reference to the Chinese origin of the silkworms is omitted.
- 29 Parkes, 'The Manuscript of *The Leiden Riddle*,' 208, and 214–15; Gerritsen, 'The Text of *The Leiden Riddle*,' 530–44; idem, 'Leiden Revisited: Further Thoughts on the Text of the *Leiden Riddle*,' 52–9.
- 30 Irving, 'Heroic Experience in the Old English Riddles,' 199–212; Stanley, 'Heroic Aspects of the Exeter Book Riddles,' 201–11.
- 31 Erhardt-Siebold, 'The Old English Loom Riddles,' 9–17.
- 32 See above, note 9. On prosopopoeia in Old English riddles, see Nelson, 'Rhetoric of the Exeter Book Riddles,' 425–8. On the device in *The Dream of the Rood*, see Schlauch, 'The Dream of the Rood as Prosopopeia,' 428–41; Braswell, 'The Dream of the Rood and Aldhelm on Sacred Prosopopoeia,' 461–7.
- 33 For an overview, see Zandvoort, 'The Leiden Riddle,' 7–8.
- 34 Bosworth and Toller, ed., *Dictionary*, 1067, s.v. *þreat*. For a military interpretation of *þreat*, see also Aertsen, 'Wulf and Eadwacer,' 136–7.
- 35 Bosworth and Toller, ed., *Dictionary*, 456, s.v. *geþræc*.
- 36 Cf. *Judith*, lines 204b–205a.
- 37 Cf. *Beowulf*, lines 650b and 703a.
- 38 Klein, 'The Old English Translation of Aldhelm's Riddle *Lorica*,' 348.
- 39 Ibid., 349.
- 40 Paronomasia on *goæd* and *goǣd* occurs five times in the *Paris Psalter*.
- 41 For example, *guðbyrne scan / heard hond locen*, *Beowulf*, lines 321b–322a; *on him byrne scan, / searonet seowed smipes orþancum* (lines 405b–406); *licsyrce min / heard hond locen helpe gefremede / beadohrægl broden* (lines 550b–552a); *scolde*

herebyrne hondum gebroden (line 1443); *Him on eaxle læg / breostnet broden* (lines 1547b–1548a); *hringnet bæron, locene leoðosyrca* (lines 1889b–1890a).

42 Lapidge, *ASL*, 181–90.

43 See Porter Stork's discussion, in *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 38–9, of the twenty-two glosses (in Royal 12. C. XXIII) providing *esse* in a first person form, as a response to the device of *prosopopoeia*.

44 Indeed, the glossator in Royal 12. C. XXIII has treated a line from *Creatura* as a riddle in its own right. Line 10, *setigero rursus constans audacior apro* ('yet I am also braver than a bristly boar') is glossed with a vowel substitution cipher (where each letter is replaced by the following letter in the Latin alphabet): *ut mfp*, thus providing the solution 'leo,' 'lion.' On this gloss, see Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 23. Cf. Orchard's discussion of vowel substitution in *Riddle* 36, 'Oral Tradition,' 116.

45 Augustine, *De ciuitate Dei*, XI, xviii: *sicut ergo ista contraria contrariis opposita sermonis pulchritudinem reddunt: ita quadam non uerborum, sed rerum eloquentia contrariorum oppositione saeculi pulchritudo componitur*.

46 O'Brien O'Keeffe, 'Text,' 67. On Rawlinson C. 697, see Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 661.

47 See Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 12. Rigg and Wieland argue that Gg. 5. 35 was a class-book at the Canterbury school, in 'A Canterbury Classbook of the Mid-Eleventh Century (the "Cambridge Songs" Manuscript),' 118–19. Lapidge argues against the use of manuscripts as class-books in 'Study of Latin Texts,' 455–98, and for the contrary view, see now Wieland, 'The Glossed Manuscript: Classbook or Library Book?,' 166. For an overview, and for the argument that the *Enigmata* were read in an environment of learning, see Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 73–8.

48 Gneuss gives the origin of Royal 12. C. XXIII as Christ Church, Canterbury, dating from the late tenth century, or early eleventh century, and notes that British Library, Royal 15. A. XVI, also originates from St Augustine's, Canterbury, dating

from late ninth-century, or early tenth-century. Gneuss also notes that an eighth-century fragment of the *Enigmata*, now in Hungary (Miskolc, Lévy József Library) also originates from south England, and another eighth-century manuscript, Munich, lat. 23486, was probably written at Canterbury. See further O’Keeffe and Journet, ‘Numerical Taxonomy and the Analysis of Manuscript Relationships,’ 140; Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 13.

- 49 See Lapidge, ed., *Aldhelm: The Poetic Works*, 247, note 45. That the *Enigmata* were studied is evident from the glosses on them, particularly in three manuscripts: British Library, Royal 15. A. XVI, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson C. 697 and British Library, Royal 12. C. XXIII. On the glosses in British Library, Royal 12. C. XXIII and Cambridge, Gg. v. 35, see Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 27–78.
- 50 Porter Stork, in *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 17, notes the glossators’ special interest in *Creatura* in two English manuscripts: Cambridge, Gg. 5. 35 and British Library Royal 15. A. XVI, as well as in the continental fragment, Bremen 651. (For the possibility that the Old High German glossator of MS St Gall 1394, now only a fragment, also expressed an unusual interest in *Creatura*, see Porter Stork, at 23.)
- 51 For a list of the Latin-Old English lexical glosses in Royal 12. C. XXIII, see Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 54.
- 52 The solution is so obvious, in fact, that it (*ego creatura*) appears in a gloss on one manuscript of the *Enigmata*, Royal 12. C. XXIII, above the last line of the poem. See Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 235, and her discussion at 39. The answer to Riddle 40 was equally obvious, as at the end of the poem in the Exeter Book, a scribe has spelled it out: *hit is sio creatura pr*. See Tupper, ed., *The Riddles of the Exeter Book*, lxxx.
- 53 Cf. Vulgate Psalm 118, verse 103: *quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua super mel ori meo* (‘how sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth’).
- 54 On the similar imagery in Ambrose of eloquence acquired through a swarm of bees settling in the mouth, see Orchard,

‘Poetic Inspiration and Prosaic Translation,’ 407.

- 55 Hartel, ed., *Paulini Nolani Carmina*, 7.
- 56 Flower, ed., *Exeter Book*, folios 110^a, and 110^b.
- 57 On this formula in Aldhelm’s verse, see Lapidge, ‘Aldhelm’s Latin Poetry,’ 264–6.
- 58 For the formula *healdeð ond wealdeð*, see *Andreas*, line 225b; the *Paris Psalter*, 75.9; 122.1.
- 59 O’Brien O’Keeffe, ‘Exeter Riddle 40: The Art of an Old English Translator,’ 113.
- 60 Tupper, ed. *Riddles*, 165.
- 61 On the influence of this biblical polyptoton, see Wills, *Repetition*, 193.
- 62 The Old English poet may have known the meaning of *nard* from Isidore’s discussion of the word (*Etymologiarum siue originum*, XVII, ix, 3), or from biblical commentaries from the Canterbury school, such the gloss on *nardi spicati* (‘of precious spikenard’), from Mark 14.3: *Nardus est arbor cuius est fructus ut lauri bacae, et in caldarium mittitur et coquitur usque ad pinguedinem, et cocleario desuper tollitur oleum. Spica herba est. Deinde commiscitur cum oleo supradictae arboris et inde odorem sumit et fit unguentus*. (‘The nard is a tree whose fruit is like the berries of the bay-tree, and it is put into a cauldron and cooked until it becomes fatty, and then the oil is skimmed off with a spoon. The “spike” is an herb. It is next mixed with the oil of the aforementioned tree and it then acquires fragrance and becomes an unguent.’) Trans. Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 410–11.
- 63 Lindsay, ed., *The Corpus Glossary*, P377, 137. Lapidge notes, in ‘The School of Theodore and Hadrian,’ 152–4, that the *Corpus Glossary* (as well as Epinal-Erfurt and Cleopatra I–II) preserves individual glosses ultimately derived from the ‘original English collection’ – a collection of glosses from Canterbury.
- 64 For *heofona heahcyning*, see *Genesis A*, lines 1025a, 2165a, *Daniel*, line 624a, *Andreas*, line 6a; *Christ III*, line 1339a; *Phoenix*, line 446a; *Lord’s Prayer III*, line 15a; *Seasons for*

Fasting, line 10a; *The Kentish Hymn*, line 42a (*hiofena heahcyninc*). For *heahcynning heofones*, see *Daniel*, line 407a; *Christ I*, line 150a; *Seasons for Fasting*, line 53a (*heofona heahcyninges*).

- 65 O'Brien O'Keeffe, 'Text,' 71–2. See also the gloss *cyclopum: ciclops. i. circulus* in Royal 12. C. XXIII, Porter Stork, *Through a Gloss Darkly*, 232.
- 66 Sedgefield, ed., *King Alfred's Boethius*, 98–9.
- 67 Lindsay, ed., *Etymologiarum siue originum*, XI, iii, 12–16.
- 68 Frankis, 'The Thematic Significance of *enta geweorc*,' especially 254–8. For example, Hercules is rendered as *Ercol se ent* in Orosius' *Historia aduersus paganos*, in Sweet, ed., *King Alfred's Orosius*, 46, line 30, and 132, line 11.
- 69 Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 78–85; Emerson, 'Legends of Cain,' 905.
- 70 In the eleventh-century *Cleopatra Glossary*, in Wright and Wülcker, ed., *Anglo-Saxon and Old English Vocabularies*, I, col. 376, line 19: *Caci: þyrses*.
- 71 Lindsay, ed., *The Corpus Glossary*, item O231, at 127: *orcus: ðyrs, heldiobul*.
- 72 Goossens, ed., *The Old English Glosses of MS Brussels, Royal Library 1650 (Aldhelm's De Laudibus Virginitatis)* item 1637, at 253 (glossing hand A): *colosi: imagini, þyrs*.
- 73 Napier, ed., *Old English Glosses*, no. 1, at 87, line 3271: *marsorum: i incantatorum, þyrsa, wyrmgalera*.
- 74 In the *Cleopatra Glossary*, in Wright and Wülcker, ed., *Vocabularies*, I, col. 378, line 25: *Cyclopum: ðyrsa*; I, col. 379, line 22: *Ciclopes: anige þyrsas*.
- 75 Wright and Wülcker, ed., *Vocabularies*, I, col. 144, line 1. The interpretation of the winds derives from Isidore, in Lindsay, ed., *Etymologiarum siue originum*, XIII, xi, 1–22, and includes a discussion of Zephyrus at XIII, xi, 8.
- 76 Baker and Lapidge, ed., *Enchiridion*, IV.1, lines 52–3, at 200.
- 77 Napier, ed., *Old English Glosses*, no. 23, line 17: *zepheri: westernes windes*.

78 See p. 168, note 107.

79 North, *Heathen Gods*, 232–41; For the gloss, see Wright and Wülcker, ed., *Vocabularies*, I, col. 425, line 36.

80 Augustine, *De ciuitate dei*, VII, xvi.

81 Lindsay, ed., *Etymologiarum siue originum*, I, xxxvii, 8–10, at section 9.

82 Lindsay, ed., *Etymologiarum siue originum*, XIX, vi, 2; cf. VIII, xi, 41.

83 Wright and Wülcker, ed., *Vocabularies*, I, col. 524, line 34.

84 Ibid., col. 529, line 15.

85 Lapidge, ‘Some Latin Poems as Evidence for the Reign of King Athel-stan,’ 72. See p. 99.

86 On *enigma* as a veil that partly obscures Christian truth, see Augustine, *De diuersis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*, CCSL 44, at 57: *uelamen quippe omnimodo intercludit aspectum, aenigma ... nec euidentissimam detegit speciem nec prorsus obtegit ueritatem*. (‘Indeed, a veil wholly covers the sight; an enigma ... does not uncover the most evident aspect nor does it utterly conceal the truth.’)

6. The Verse and Virtuosity of Cynewulf

1 *Christ II* is based on Homily XXIX by Gregory the Great (PL 76, 1218–19). Versions of the *Vita S. Cyriaci* similar to the original source of *Elene* are found in ASS, *Maius*, I, 445–8; Mombritius, ed., *Sanctuarium seu uitae sanctorum*, 376–9; Holder, ed., *Inuentio Sanctae Crucis*, 1–13. ASS, *Februarius*, II, 873–7 is a redaction of the *Passio S. Iulianae* similar to that of *Juliana*. (All references to the sources of *Elene* are to ASS). Michael Lapidge, in ‘Cynewulf and the *Passio S. Iulianae*,’ 147–65, has argued that *Juliana* is based on a version of the *Passio S. Iulianae* found in MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 10861. For an overview of Cynewulf’s Latin sources, see Dubois, *Les éléments latins dans la poésie religieuse de Cynewulf*, 43–99; Jehle, ‘Latin Rhetoric in the Signed Poems of Cynewulf.’

- 2 On the evidence of shared formulas, see Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance,' 272–3. Fulk, in 'Cynewulf: Canon, Dialect and Date,' 4–9, argues that Cynewulf composed *Guthlac B*, on the basis of metrical evidence.
- 3 Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance,' 278–94; idem, 'Computing Cynewulf: The *Judith*-Connection,' 77–98.
- 4 In a stylistic study of the poetic openings, in 'Both Style and Substance,' 291–3, Orchard argues persuasively that Cynewulf – the author of *The Fates of the Apostles* – knew and consciously echoed *Beowulf*.
- 5 For example, Aldhelm uses a signatory acrostic and telestich in his verse preface to his *Enigmata* (Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 97–9), and also in his verse preface to the *Carmen de uirginitate* (350–2). Cf. also Tatwine's *Enigmata*, each linked by an acrostic (CCSL 133, 165–208) and the *Enigmata* of Boniface, in which the solution is presented in an acrostic or telestich (CCSL 133, 273–343). On the signatory acrostic and telestich in two poems by Caelius Sedulius, see Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 165–6, and on acrostics more generally, see Lapidge, 'Some Latin Poems,' 60–71. One might also compare Cynewulf's coded signature to Aediluulf's punning signature set within the modesty topos at the close of his poem. See Campbell, ed., *Æthelwulf: De Abbatibus*, lines 796–7: *haec Lupus, alte pater, stolido de pectore Clarus / carmina conposuit* ('These songs, exalted father, the "renowned Wolf" produced from his simple heart').
- 6 The study of the figures of rhetoric in Old English has long been associated with Cynewulf. The most recent discussions are Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf,' 293–4; idem, 'Computing Cynewulf,' 96–7; Wine, *Figurative Language in Cynewulf*, 29–92; Jehle, 'Latin Rhetoric in the Signed Poems of Cynewulf.' For more general studies of Cynewulf's style, see Calder, *Cynewulf*; Anderson, *Cynewulf: Structure, Style, and Theme in His Poetry*. Two pioneering works on the individuality of Cynewulf's style are Das, *Cynewulf and the Cynewulf Canon*, and Schaar, *Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group*, but for criticism of their methodology, see Butler, 'Cynewulf Question Revived,' 15–23.

- 7 Cherniss, 'The Oral-Traditional Opening Theme in the Poems of Cynewulf,' 48 and 53–8.
- 8 ASS, 445.
- 9 See p. 163, note 43 and p. 175, note 61.
- 10 Kennedy, "'Truth" and "Rhetoric" in the Pauline Epistles,' 197–202.
- 11 *Genesis*, lines 1121a and 1264a; *Paris Psalter*, 89.11, *The Coronation of Edgar*, line 19a.
- 12 Lampugnani, 'Giochi paronomastici nell'*Elena* di Cynewulf,' 303–17; Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Literacy and Orality,' 360–80.
- 13 See this word-play in Judas's prayer to find the Cross, lines 725b–726, 751, 780b–781, and 800, and after the finding of the Cross, at lines 891b–892. See Frank, 'Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse,' 212; Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Literacy and Orality,' 372.
- 14 *Andreas*, line 566b; *Elene*, line 178a, 775a; *Christ II*, line 444a; *The Menologium*, line 168a.
- 15 See further Brown, 'The Descent-Ascent Motif in *Christ II* of Cynewulf,' 133.
- 16 The hapax compound *mundheals* ('protection'? 'protecting-salvation'? 'hand-neck' = 'body'?) may recall the paradox that as mother of God, Mary protected her Saviour and gave birth to her Creator. Cf. *Historia Apostolica*, I, lines 57–8: *Dei genetrix intacta creantis / a nato formata suo* ('the virgin mother of her Creator, formed by her own Son.')
- 17 Thiel, *Grundlagen und Gestalt der Hebräischkenntnisse des frühen Mittelalters*, 351.
- 18 The real etymology of 'Miriam' is still disputed. The most plausible etymology views it as an Egyptian name, from *mryt* 'loved one.' The Old Testament Miriam was the sister of Moses and Aaron, who both came from Egypt and bore Egyptian names, so an Egyptian etymology is likely. Other etymologies suggested by modern scholars relate 'Miriam' to the root *rym* 'gift' and to the root 'fat' *mr* (מֵרָם). See Koehler

and Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* s.v. מרים.

- 19 Thiel, *Grundlagen und Gestalt der Hebräischkenntnisse des frühen Mittelalters*, 351 (Jerome and Isidore).
- 20 See Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Literacy and Orality,' 375–8, for Cynewulf's play on the roles of characters in *Elene* through allusion to interpretations of Hebrew and Syriac etymologies. For the pun on *or*, see *ibid.*, 377, note 85. Other Old English poets have also used word-play on learned etymologies. For example, in *Genesis A*, there is an allusion to the Logos, the Word, through the threefold play on *weard*, *wereda*, *wordum*, linking the opening account of Creation, with the opening of John's Gospel, 'in the beginning was the Word' (Frank, 'Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse,' 212). Frank (*ibid.*, 216–17) has also noted that the vernacular poets of biblical paraphrase elucidate etymologies of Hebrew names through paronomasia and alliteration, for example, pairing 'Daniel' (Hebrew 'God has judged') with *drihten* and *dom* ('Lord' and 'judgement').
- 21 S.v. *lusus nominum* in the index to McKinlay, ed., *De Actibus Apostolorum*, 191. Thiel, *Grundlagen und Gestalt der Hebräischkenntnisse des frühen Mittelalters*, 42–3, notes nine etymologies on names in Arator, four of which are derived from Jerome and one from Ambrose.
- 22 On Solomon, see *Historia Apostolica*, I, lines 288–92: *Post limina templi / Porticus hunc Salomonis habet qui iure uocatur / Pacificus; regnante fide semper in orbe / Pacificus nisi Christus erit?* ('After the threshold of the temple, the Porch of Solomon, who is rightly called Peacemaker, holds him [the lame man]; in the reign of faith, who will always be called Peacemaker in the world except Christ?' Trans. Schrader, 33).
- 23 *Historia Apostolica*, I, lines 618. These and other etymologies are noted in the *lusus nominum*, in McKinlay's index, 191.
- 24 Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Orality and Literacy,' 373.
- 25 Frank, 'Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse,' 211–15; Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Orality and Literacy,'

- 26 Kintgen, 'Lif, lof, leof, lufu, and geleafa in Old English Poetry,' 309–16; Lampugnani, 'Giochi paromastici nell'*Elena* di Cynewulf,' 315–16; Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Orality and Literacy,' 363–5.
- 27 The term 'satellite word' is derived from Battles, 'The Art of the *Scop*,' 33, and is adopted by Zacher, 'Cynewulf at the Interface of Orality and Literacy,' 362.
- 28 On similar word-play in *Elene*, see Lampugnani, 'Giochi paromastici nell'*Elena* di Cynewulf,' 314.
- 29 On parallel passages in *Beowulf*, see Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*, 76–79, Appendices II and III. See also Shippey, *Old English Verse*, 86–9. On the use of echoic repetition to link passages in *Genesis A*, see Battles, 'The Art of the *Scop*,' 205–18.
- 30 On Cynewulf's use of echoic repetition ('echo-word') for thematic emphasis, see Battles, 'Art of the *Scop*,' 177–83 and 219–23.
- 31 On the arrangement of the anaphora, see Wine, *Figurative Language in Cynewulf*, 36.
- 32 On the distribution of double alliteration in Old English poems, see Hutcheson, *Old English Poetic Metre*, 271.
- 33 Arator, for example, often invokes the 'gifts of salvation,' *dona salutis*, especially in support of his allegorical interpretations. See, for example, *Historia Apostolica*, Book I, lines 141–2.
- 34 Grosz, 'Man's Imitation of the Ascension,' 103.
- 35 Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance,' 274.
- 36 *Elene*, line 424b; *Christ II*, line 1446b.
- 37 Clemoes, *Rhythm and Cosmic Order*, 12–13. See also Grosz, 'Man's Imitation of the Ascension,' 104–6.
- 38 Anderson, *Cynewulf*, 34.
- 39 Cross, 'The Old English Poetic Theme of the "The Gifts of Men",' 69.

- 40 For example, *Historia Apostolica*, Book II, lines 757–8: ‘while the tongue of Paul was spreading seeds fraught with salvation’ (*lingua colona Dei cum semina feta saluti / spargeret*).
- 41 On the influence of this parable on the poem, *The Gifts of Men*, see Cross, ‘The Old English Poetic Theme of “The Gifts of Men”’, 66–70.
- 42 *Historia Apostolica*, II, lines 837–9. See also Book I, lines 365–9.
- 43 Tristram, ‘Stock Descriptions,’ 109–10.
- 44 Tristram, ed., *Vier altenglischen Predigten*, III, lines 156–63, at 168.
- 45 On doublets as a homiletic feature, see Clemoes, *Interactions*, 44–5; ‘Style as Criterion,’ 180.
- 46 Pasternack, *Textuality*, 53–7; Rissanen, ‘Sum in Old English Poetry,’ 204–12.
- 47 Russom, ‘Germanic Concept,’ 1–15; Cross, ‘Old English Poetic Theme,’ 66–70; idem, ‘On the *Wanderer*,’ 77–103.
- 48 Neckel and Kuhn, ed., *Edda*, 288–96.
- 49 On repeated *sum* as an ultimately Latinate device, see Cross, ‘On *The Wanderer* Lines 80–84,’ 84; Tristram, ‘Stock Descriptions,’ 109–10. The *Visio Sancti Pauli* is presented as a source for the ‘fortunes of men’ in Silverstein, ed., *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 156. Although it does not appear to have been translated into Old English, this passage was well known in Anglo-Saxon England, as demonstrated by Healey, ed., *Old English Vision of St Paul*, 52–4.
- 50 ASS, *Februarius*, II, xi, 875. Clayton and Magennis, ed., *St Margaret*, Appendix II, XV, 164 and 208.
- 51 Homily XXIX, x (PL 76, 1219).
- 52 For polyptoton, cf. Lampugnani, ‘Giochi paronomastici nell’*Elena di Cynewulf*,’ 305–6. For paronomasia on *rod* and *rodor*, see Frank, ‘Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse,’ 210; Zacher, ‘Cynewulf at the Interface of Orality and Literacy,’ 361–3.
- 53 ASS, *Maius*, I, II, iii, 445. See Pasternack, *Textuality*, 54;

Anderson, *Cynewulf*, 70–2.

- 54 On rhymes in Anglo-Latin and Hiberno-Latin verse, see Orchard, *Poetic Art*, 39–42.
- 55 Schaar, *Critical Studies*, 68–70; Sisam, ‘Cynewulf and His Poetry,’ 1 and 17–18. For rhymes in Old and Middle English, see Stanley, ‘Rhymes in English Medieval Verse,’ 19–38; Macrae-Gibson, *The Old English Riming Poem*, 21–5; Zacher, ‘Cynewulf at the Interface of Literacy and Orality,’ 350–3.
- 56 For such an injunction, see, for example, Clemons, ed., *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies*, XXXIX, 521, line 52.
- 57 Thiel, *Grundlagen und Gestalt der Hebräischkenntnisse des frühen Mittelalters*, 328, s.v. Jesu(s).
- 58 Huemer, ed., *Carmen Paschale*, IV, lines 21–30, at 92–3.
- 59 On Cynewulf’s repetition of temporal adverbs, see Shippey, *Old English Verse*, 161 and 165.
- 60 Hartel, ed., *Sancti Pontii Meropii Paulini Nolani Carmina*, Appendix, III, at 353. See xxviii–xxxv, and CSEL 30, xxviii–xxxv, for a discussion of the incorrect attribution of the poem to Paulinus.
- 61 Tangl, ed., *Die Briefe des Heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, 9, at 7.
- 62 Ibid., 124, at 262. In another letter, *ibid.*, 147, at 285, Berthgyth signs off an appeal to her brother with the Aldhelmian octosyllables, connected by leonine rhyme. See also *ibid.*, 148, at 286–7.
- 63 See above, p. 66.
- 64 Cf. Roberta Frank’s discussion (‘Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse,’ 215, note 27) of paronomasia expressing transience in Middle English poetry, particularly the play on the year’s *curriculum* in *Gawain and the Green Knight*, line 498: *A ere ernes ful erne, and eldez neuer lyke*, ‘a year runs by very swiftly and never brings back the same things.’
- 65 Wine, *Figurative Language*, 66.
- 66 Ibid., 56–68.
- 67 Trans. Schrader, *Arator on the Acts of the Apostles (De actibus*

Apostolorum), 29.

68 Curtius, *European Literature*, 128–30. See also Arator, *Historia Apostolica*, Book I, line 184 (*uitae portitor*).

69 Trans. Schrader, *Arator on the Acts of the Apostles (De actibus Apostolorum)*, 22.

70 Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 466–7.

71 Diamond, ‘Theme as Ornament in Anglo-Saxon Poetry,’ 465.

72 Cf. the compounds describing ‘ship’ and ‘sea’ in Beowulf’s return journey to Geatland: *hringedstefna* (‘ring-prowed ship,’ line 1897b), *sundwudu* (‘sea-wood,’ line 1906b), *wegflota* (‘wave-floater,’ line 1907a), *bundenstefna* (‘bound-prowed ship,’ line 1910a), *brimstreamas* (‘ocean-streams,’ line 1910b). For further parallels between *Elene* and *Beowulf*, see Sarrazin, ‘Beowulf und Kynnewulf,’ 515–16.

73 Orchard, ‘Poetic Inspiration and Prosaic Translation,’ 405–10.

74 Godman, ed., *Alcuin*, 62, line 749; 112, line 1435.

75 Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera*, 99, line 31.

76 See also Hieatt, ‘*The Fates of the Apostles*: Imagery, Structure, and Meaning,’ 72–3.

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